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PLEASE NOTICE

the commencement this month of a new series entitled "Notes on *Mysterium Ecclesiae*". It will run for several months and is of the greatest importance in view of contemporary modernist trends within the Church. We have to say, with regret that, because of present printing costs and arrangements, we can give no guarantee that those who are late with their renewals of subscription will necessarily be ensured a copy. Prompt renewal on the first reminder is recommended for all who wish to study and preserve for reference this masterly series of articles. — The Editor.

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Paul Crane SJ

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Unpleasant Creature

THE EDITOR

BORIS Nikolayevich Ponomarev is a thoroughly repulsive little man. His looks belie his trade. The picture most frequently shown of him during his visit to this country at the end of last year conveyed the impression of an ageing, unobtrusive and slightly servile bank clerk; Strube's "little man" of years gone by. In reality, he is a killer; a dealer in destruction and death. His special task is the disintegration of the West by way of prelude to its eventual take-over by Soviet Power. These facts are known to all but the perennially light-headed, of whom there are a larger number than usual in this country at the present time. Ponomarev should never have been brought here under any pretext whatsoever.

As he left after his visit last November he had the impudence to remark: "We (in the Soviet Union) don't have any unemployment, we don't have inflation and we don't have a currency crisis. Every Soviet citizen feels that his well-being increases from year to year" (*Guardian* 4/11/76). Committed goons on the extreme Left of British Politics clucked no doubt with satisfaction as they read these words. Others, less involved but witless, thought most probably that there was something in what the little man said and were duly, if slightly, softened up by this veteran employer of double-speak.

In fact, what this nasty little creature needed telling to his face and with firmness was the following — there may well

be no unemployment in the Soviet Union; but, then, there is no unemployment in Dartmoor. No one has ever doubted that the problem of unemployment can be solved quite simply by turning a country into an outsize equivalent of Dartmoor, as Russia's red rulers have done. But this is a totally unsatisfactory solution of the problem of unemployment because the price paid is the forced surrender of freedom in return for something close to forced labour. The problem, at base, is not that of curing unemployment, but of curing it in a way that is compatible with the retention by the citizen of his most precious gift, which is his personal freedom. This the Communist rulers of Russia have signally failed to do. Under Communism, the whole country has been turned by a barbaric top into a primitive prison, which repulsive henchmen of its power elite have the neck to describe on trips abroad (the perquisite of the favoured few) as a secular paradise. It may be for them, with their *dachas* and their many perks; but it most certainly is not for the poor devils who lie under their well-built heel. That is the first point and it is enough to damn the Soviet Union out of existence in the eyes of all but the congenitally besotted, who regard the antheap as an ideal form of human living — with the unspoken presumption, of course that, in the "New Britain" they will be sitting safe on its top. They recognise now — though they are careful not to say it — that, as George Orwell pointed out years ago, an equalitarian society can only be made to work if, in it, some make themselves more equal than others; and the "some", in the eyes of extreme Lefties, can only be themselves.

"We don't have inflation", Ponomarev went on to say. Quite so, but you do have rationing and queues and an internal passport system for the workers and the KGB to supervise everything, and informers and punishment, often to the point of death, for those guilty of what you call so picturesquely "economic sabotage"; which means taking advantage of the black market that always comes to life under the Soviet type of centralised economic control: in other words, the constriction almost to zero of that freedom of choice which is an essential expression of human dignity and which government, in consequence, is bound, not to stifle, but to respect. For government's *raison d'être* is the promotion of dignity; that, in the last analysis, is what it is

for. If, instead, it uses its power not to promote dignity, but to strangle it, then, as Pope Leo XIII said in 1891, it denies the very reason for its existence. That precisely is what the Soviet Government does through its denial of freedom; so doing it is no more than a giant contradiction in terms.

Neither, Ponomarev went on to add, did they have a currency crisis in the Soviet Union. Quite so; there can't be because there is, in that country, no free exchange of currency — an obvious derivative from the fact that there is there, with other nations, no free trade; only the manipulation of both in the interests of state power, irrespective entirely of the interests of the consumer. It was exactly the same in Germany during the thirties under Hitler and Dr. Schacht. These two unpleasant individuals are Ponomarev's true bed-fellows and, when you come to think of it, not too strange at that.

As for the little man's last famous remark — that "every Soviet citizen feels that his well-being increases from year to year" — one can only describe this as a typical example of what the psychiatrists call "projection" or somesuch, I believe. Ponomarev feels fine — of course he does — because he is sitting on top of the human pile that is the unfortunate Soviet proletariat. He has a good life as a member of what Milovan Djilas called "the New Class" in one of the most unequal societies in the world. Ponomarev is on top and takes all that the top can offer at the price of the poor devils trodden into the bottom — special shops where choice for him would be almost unlimited, special restaurants where the same applies, special perks of all kinds, the prospect always before him of honours and promotion; not a queue in the world and not a care in the world — except to keep with the top: for the rest, all found at will. Nice, then, for Mr. Ponomarev and, like all other petty tyrants similarly placed, stupid enough to imagine that, because he has never had it so good, everyone else, in his own degree, is of the same mind: according to him the poor victims of his tyranny at the bottom of the heap — which means most of the Russian people — are positively beaming with joy.

It makes me feel quite sick even to read of such sentiments rolling off the tongue of a creature like this. I can only pray that on an increasing number of my countrymen the very thought of him will produce a similar effect.

This brief article carries conviction because the case it presents is in no way over-stated. It deserves careful study and thought.

Masonry and Africa

Background and Indication

CZESLAW JESMAN

FREE Masonry reached the peak of its international influence at the time of the Treaty of Versailles after the First World War, when men were thinking in terms of putting paid to future wars, secret diplomacy and all other real or imagined ills of mankind. There can be no doubt but that it was actively employed as a lever of French diplomacy in Eastern Europe in those post-war years. Governments of the States with which France constructed her Little Entente in those years after World War I — Czechoslovakia, Rumania and, up to a point, Jugoslavia — were stiff with high-ranking Masons. President Benes of Czechoslovakia and, in all probability, his distinguished predecessor, Jan Masaryk, belonged to the Fraternity; and so did Titulescu, the all-powerful Foreign Minister of a succession of Rumanian Governments.

Details of the connections, influence and personalities of the Masonic International during the twentieth century (our own) will probably never be known in any real detail. After all, Masonry was founded as a secret society at the beginning of the eighteenth century; and secret it has remained. From time to time odd snippets of factual information concerning its activities have cropped up. Thus, to give a few examples, Sidonio Pais, the king-president of Portugal, was assassinated on the order of the Portuguese Lodges in 1919.

Between the two world wars, Masonry was the power behind the scenes in Belgium and, to a lesser degree in France, during the time of the Third Republic. Certainly, Masonry was a force to be reckoned with in the Second Spanish Republic until its dissolution in the bloody shambles of the Spanish Civil War.

The Soviet and Communist "*Famiglia delle Famiglie*", not unlike its American and Sicilian counterparts, are said to be hostile to Masonry. Oddly enough "Bierut", the first President of "People's Poland", set up by Moscow on the rump of the Polish Commonwealth in 1945 and a dependable Communist trusty, was what might be called a "dormant" Mason. And a number of Masons thrived for a time in non-executive posts of the Communist Establishment in Poland after the Second World War.

Traditionally, Masons were powerful, too, in the Ministries of the Overseas Possessions of Belgium and France. Indeed, in the development of these colonial areas, Masons could boast no mean part. To pick one of them at random, Savorgnan de Brazza, the great French explorer of Central Africa, was a Mason; so, too, was the outstanding figure of Algerian independence, Abd el Kader, who fought the French for thirteen years in the middle of the nineteenth century. Later on, he was active in other parts of the Ottoman Empire; during this time, much to his credit and at the risk of his life, he saved thousands of Christians during the anti-Christian riots in Damascus. The same Abd el Kader was initiated into the Lodge, "Henri IV" in Algiers. Subsequently, he became Grand Master of the "Les Pyramides" Lodge founded in Alexandria by the "Lodge of Lodges", the French Grand Orient. And in 1871, after the downfall of the French Second Empire, Abd el Kader, the ex-arch-enemy of France, was decorated with the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour. Small wonder, then, that the crucial secret negotiations between France and the Algerian Irredentists in 1958 were conducted by M. Boumendjel, an Algerian Arab who was a member of the Grand Lodge of France.

There is also a long tradition of masonic involvement in what were to become the French-speaking African Republics of today. M. Schoelcher, a Deputy of the French National Assembly after the downfall of the Bourbon-Orleans

Monarchy in 1848, was responsible for the abolition of slavery in France's overseas possessions. A century later, M. Ravel, an ex-Grand Master of the Grand Orient, laid down the grand design for French Africa of his brand of Masonry, which was the strongest on the European continent. It consisted, in the first place, of the Africanisation of Masonry's membership in Africa: French colonial and police dignitaries were to leave their respective Lodges in Africa. On the other hand, Grand Orients were to be set up in every French African republic. The Lodge, "Eurafrica", was to serve as a link between these and the Grand Orient of France, colloquially known as "Rue Cadet" from its not-so-secret address in Paris. It is characteristic that all afromasonic jewels and insignia are still manufactured there.

Undoubtedly, it is important in any inquiry into masonic influence in what were the French and Belgian possessions in Africa, to study whether, nowadays, they are following the guidelines set by M. Ravel. Where this is so, then masonic influence can be presumed. At the same time, it should be remembered that these aims can merge temporarily and in the shorter run with the legitimate aspirations of newly sovereign nations. Thus, for example, it is perfectly proper for emergent nations to make the request for indigenous ecclesiastical hierarchies; one should note, at the same time, that it would be masonic policy to advocate the evolution of "national churches" and/or to aid and abet heresy, which would include, of course, the build-up of devotional and liturgical practices whose effect in the end is to erode — and, even, eradicate—doctrinal truth. Again, it is legitimate, to put it mildly, for a nation to seek to recover the best in its historical past, but it is quite another thing to do so to the exclusion of other excellent, external influences that have impinged upon it. Here, the range is enormous. It stretches from the anachronistic racialism of the late Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana to the "negritude" of Leopold Sedar Senghor, President of Senegal and a not inconsiderable poet, through the various brands of Marxism, Maoism, Castroism, Leninism and Brezhnevism, which are found to a greater or lesser degree within the *Elites* of some African countries. All these trends can and are being made, however good the original intention, to correspond to the master plan of the Grand Orient with regard to religion. The recent official

abolition of Christian names in Zaire conforms to this pattern. Needless to say it is warmly approved of by Boris Ponomarev, Moscow's man in charge of overseas subversion.

The Masonry of English-speaking countries publicly abjures any kind of connection with (European) continental and African "political" Masonry. In Africa, however, there is a wide twilight zone where it is difficult to say who is who and who does what to whom. There is, for example, a Supreme World Council in Charleston in the United States. It is affiliated with the Great Central Directorate of Calcutta, which co-ordinates the Lodges in Asia and Oceania. It has a Subdirectoriate for Africa. Some years ago, its Grand Master, Horace de Cayla, resided at Port Louis in Mauritius. It is — or was — very active in the Malagasay Republic (the old Madagascar) and the French-speaking islands of the Indian Ocean, all of them primary targets of Communist subversion at the moment.

For an outsider it is impossible to affirm with any degree of factual evidence whether these bodies have any contact with, for example, the AMORC, i.e. the International Masonic Federation of Rosicrucian Brotherhoods of the United States, France, England, Africa and Switzerland. The validity and credibility of these shadowy bodies is also a matter of conjecture. But the contingency of their ideologies — seen in the context of political and social development rather than the euphemisms of overt programmes — is undoubted. Sometimes small events are indicative of infinitely more powerful forces which cause them. Thus the latter-day "lay saint", Doctor Schweitzer, acclaimed by the humanitarian mass media, was decorated before his death with the Mathias Claudius Medal, the highest distinction conferred by German Masonry. And he was certainly no friend of any kind of Catholic missionary effort.

Much has been said about the spirit of ecumenical ardour at present within the Catholic Church. Indeed, both Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI have bent over backwards in their zealous endeavours to promote the unity of all men of goodwill. But to bring it to a happy consummation a spirit of reciprocity is indispensable. Catholics are now allowed to belong to the Masonic Fraternity without incurring automatic excommunication, presumably in pursuit of this aim. But there is no evidence that Masonry itself has in any way

softened its doctrine with a view to meeting the overtures of Rome. The battle cry of Voltaire — arch-enemy of the Church in the eighteenth century — is well remembered: "Ecraser l'Infame". There is to date no evidence that it has been repudiated by any masonic body. For the Lodges "the infamous thing" is still the Catholic Church and all its works; and ultimately, of course, the Revelation of God to man, which it is the duty of that Church, at one and the same time, to preserve and to carry to mankind. In Africa today this unyielding masonic attitude is particularly in evidence.

WHAT IT IS ALL ABOUT

When Professor Jerome Lejeune was being cross-examined by the Royal Commission he said, amongst other things, that, while attending a Paris Press Conference where Catholics, Protestants, Humanists and people of other Beliefs put forward their views; "All of them said what they wanted to say (about abortion) and there was one woman who was a chief of the campaign in France for abortion and she spoke; and at that moment all stopped writing because she was not talking about abortion any longer. She said bluntly, 'We are fighting to destroy Judaeo-Christian society and civilization. To destroy it we have to destroy the family, we have to destroy its weakest point, and the weakest point of a family is the unborn child. Hence we are for abortion'." — Extract from a Newsletter of SPUC (Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child).

Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness

HENRY EDWARDS

YEAR after year tourists from the United States of America come to London and ask where they can find the English Constitution. (I have written "English" deliberately.) To their general surprise they are told that it does not exist. A number of them may ask to see a copy of *Magna Carta* or even the various Bills of Right (Burke would have made much of the years 1688-9), which came into being, not because their authors wanted to enunciate new principles or indeed any principles, but because they felt that certain prescriptive laws, the heritage of their nation and of it alone, had been disregarded or violated, so that some restatement was called for.

But we in these Isles may ask for and get a copy of the (1776) *Declaration of American Independence*, which amounts to a preamble to the written Constitution of the United States, which was drawn up in 1787. In 1788 it had been adopted by 11 of the 13 states which had rebelled against England. It came into full force in 1789. Its designers wanted flexibility and hundreds of amendments to it have been proposed though only twenty-one have been adopted. The first ten, sometimes called the *American Bill of Rights*, seem to be echoes of the *English Bill of Rights* of 1689, perhaps the plinth upon which American democracy was built. Of the other amendments the following seem worthy of note:

The 14th amendment (1868), which was intended to give white and negro citizens equality of civil rights. It was a somewhat natural consequence of the victory of the Yankees in the Civil War.

The 15th (1913), which provided for the composition of the Senate by the election from each State of two Senators who would hold office for six years.

The 18th. This is perhaps the most famous. It was ratified in 1919 and made the U.S.A. go "dry".

The 19th was passed during President Wilson's last term of office (1920). It gave the vote to women and, incidentally, led to isolationism, since American women had become strongly opposed to any war involving the U.S.A. in Europe. "I didn't raise my son to be a soldier."

The 21st in 1933 ended prohibition. The 22nd limited the presidential terms to no more than two. Perhaps there will never be an amendment which makes it less easy for people to buy and use guns of any sort. The notions of "frontier" and "liberty" are so fused that almost certainly most Americans would resist such an amendment, despite the numerous and easy murders, especially in the great cities.

What concerns me here is the *Declaration of Independence of July 4th, 1776* and, most especially, the second paragraph which has it: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable (sic) rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness". I leave alone what the other self-evident rights were for the framers of that *Declaration*. (Its main author was Jefferson.) What may reasonably come to many of its readers is the consideration that such truths are not self-evident even if they are true. It would have been valuable had Mr. Jefferson expatiated a little upon "created equal". Jefferson was a whole-hearted believer in *laissez-faire*, which, to many, hardly consorts with the emergence of a tangible equality. Hamilton, who cannot be avoided when we consider Jefferson, had a contempt for "the turbulent and changing masses", who "seldom judge or determine right". Indeed, several of the rebels at the time were explicitly anti-democratic. Washington himself urged that no basic comment should be composed which would "please the people". Of all such men one may elect Jeremy Belkham, a Yankee cleric, who wrote: "Let it stand as a principle that government originates from the people; but let the people be taught that they are unable to govern themselves".

No one made a better defence, in reality, of the English

House of Lords than that great American, John Adams, in his *Defence of the Constitution of Government of the United States of America*, which reached Philadelphia when the Constitution was still being considered. Adams held that there should be two houses, the one democratic and the other aristocratic, in order to achieve balance. Typically, the negroes and more radically the aboriginals were left out of the practical understanding of "born equal". The last were said in the *Declaration* to be "the merciless Indians, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions". It is highly probable that these people, described in the *Declaration* as "inhabitants of our frontiers", were being so far protected by George III that the colonists rebelled because he refused to let them steal the lands of such "vile" creatures.

Of "Life" we can only guess the purport. Was there some context wherein the right to life was denied? Long ago, one critic observed that the *Constitution of the United States* was based "on the philosophy of Hobbes and the religion of Calvin". The former's view was that the natural state of mankind is a state of war; the latter's that the "carnal mind is at enmity with God", which, however, is not calvinistic but quite orthodox. It may be that Jefferson, despite his optimistic faith in human goodness, realised that some defence of human life within the new Leviathan was to be set down. But what of the "self-evident truth"? What did he and his fellows mean by Liberty? Later, during the debates on the *Constitution*, its opponents pressed for freedom of religion and other freedoms which were put into the ten amendments. There is copious evidence that the framers of the *Constitution* as well as Jefferson considered liberty as based upon property. It may very well have been this base which helped create the urge to "go West" and stake out claims to a property.

The "self-evident" right to "the Pursuit of Happiness" seems to be the most dubious, because it is tolerably certain that hardly anyone would agree with anyone else about the idea of happiness and about the means of its pursuit. There is ample evidence that the so-called Early Fathers, notably Jefferson but not Hamilton, thought of such a pursuit through the agrarian life. But Jefferson, the idealistic democrat, called the popular masses "canaille" and worse. He also

wrote that "the sheep are happier of themselves than under the care of the wolves". The wolves in one place appear to be "you and I and Congress and Assemblies". At the moment of writing there is a BBC2 feature called "The Waltons", a family living the rural life in our own time. Frugal, generally in good spirits, godly, giving and receiving aid to similar families about them, spiritually divorced from that megalopolitan world, which the first Fathers dreaded and which seems to have overcome the Americans for the most part in our time.

Perhaps Americans like Babbit and T. S. Eliot might have told us much of value about the pursuit of happiness. But perhaps they would not have had in mind what the Fathers were thinking about. Though the U.S.A. is a signal example of the utterly laical state, its Fathers were permeated with Christian doctrines more or less. Perhaps it might have been better had the Fathers had recourse to the Christian Fathers and Doctors who, to arrive at a view of happiness, reascended to Christian origins.

PLUS CA CHANGE

"The outward behaviour and gesture of the receiver should want (lack) all kind of suspicion, show, or inclination of idolatry, wherefore, seeing kneeling is a show and external sign of honoring and worshipping, and heretofore hath grievous and damnable idolatry been committed by the honoring of the Sacrament, I would wish it were commanded by the magistrates that the communicators and receivers should do it standing or sitting." — John Hooper, Protestant Bishop of Gloucester preaching, Lent 1550, before King & Court.

In this first article on *Mysterium Ecclesiae* W. H. Marshner deals brilliantly and extremely clearly with the unity and identity of the Church. As they read this article, readers will identify as quite opposed to the teaching of *Mysterium Ecclesiae* the views of several prominent clerics in this country. These include bishops and well-known theologians. Acknowledgements to *The Wanderer* (U.S.A.).

Notes on *Mysterium Ecclesiae*

W. H. MARSHNER

1: UNITY AND IDENTITY OF THE CHURCH

THE document which Rome released on July 5th, 1973, in the form of a "Declaration in Defence of the Catholic Doctrine on the Church against Certain Errors of the Present Day" — and which is more manageable by its Latin name, *Mysterium Ecclesiae* — is important beyond calculation. In clear terms and in a manner requiring interior, religious assent, it forbids all Catholic believers to hold five propositions which, up to this time, have enjoyed widespread support (verging on total support) in the most progressive Catholic circles. To these five specific condemnations, the new document adds a vitally important declaration on the invalidity (that is, the nullity) of all attempts to confect the Eucharist by those who have not received the Sacrament of Holy Orders from bishops in the Apostolic Succession. Furthermore, *Mysterium Ecclesiae* devotes its most crucial chapter (5) to overthrowing the whole basis for a programme of so-called dogmatic development or "reformulation" as conceived by Fathers Karl Rahner, Avery Dulles, Raymond Brown and innumerable like-minded theologians.

Mysterium Ecclesiae is a document of liberation. Moreover, for a persecuted minority of priests and scholars — men and women who have been silenced, denied tenure, fired, removed, arbitrarily retired, and vilified; long established authors who have suddenly found that journal after journal was closed to their contributions, for the simple reason that they dared to suggest that prominent ideas in post-conciliar theology were ambiguous, erroneous or even in some cases “opposed to the Catholic Faith in fundamental matters” — for all these victims the new document is a priceless vindication.

Background

In 1943, despite the fact that Europe had been set ablaze by an all-encompassing World War, Pope Pius XII found it necessary to issue an Encyclical Letter on the Mystical Body of Christ. He was prompted to do so in large part because a seriously erroneous ecclesiology had begun to crystallize around the term “Mystical Body”, especially in Germany. Speaking very broadly, the touchstone of the error lay in the notion that the Church as Mystical Body possessed properties at variance with those which could be deduced from the idea of the Church as a visible, hierarchical society under the Pope. In other words, the Mystical Body was being used as a “model” of the Church through which to relativise and hence undermine conclusions long since drawn from another “model”. In no area was this tendency more pronounced than in ecumenical speculation. To counter it, Pius XII had to insist that the Mystical Body of Christ and the Roman Catholic Church are identical.

After the war, speculation that the true Church, when viewed under some “model” or formality, could be shown to be a much broader affair than the Roman Catholic communion was revived and formed one aspect of the movement known as the New Theology. Again Pius XII was moved to act, this time in 1950 with the Encyclical *Humani Generis*. He wrote: “Some say they are not bound by the doctrine, explained in Our Encyclical Letter of a few years ago and based on the sources of Revelation, which teaches that the Mystical Body of Christ and the Roman Catholic Church are one and the same thing. Some reduce to a

meaningless formula the necessity of belonging to the true Church in order to gain eternal salvation". (*Humani Generis*, para. 44-45; AAS 42, pp. 561 ff.)

In hindsight, it is increasingly clear that Pius XII's decision to act in 1950 was prophetic. The line of thought begun in the post-war New Theology and temporarily checked by *Humani Generis* has broken forth again with enormous force since Vatican II. In fact, the Council itself has been widely misrepresented as having been in effect a repeal of *Humani Generis*. Respectable theologians have spent ten years rejoicing in the post-conciliar "fresh air" precisely because it permitted them, they believed, to breathe again the air of 1949.

A Widespread Misrepresentation

And certainly no misrepresentation has been more widely and assiduously marketed than the idea that Vatican II re-defined the Church. We have all heard of the famous "concentric" theory, according to which Vatican II is supposed to have said that the visible Roman Catholic body is only the "centre" of the whole Church, and that other communions and ecclesial bodies are part of the Church as well. This, and similar ideas, advanced as attempts to provide a theoretical justification for inter-communion, are said to "replace" an older and narrower view (that of Pius XII, of course) or else are said to be "held in tension" with the older view. This "holding in tension" is accomplished, once again, by asserting that the Church is too incomprehensible a mystery to be understood from any one vantage point or definition. Rather, one needs three or four competing definitions called "models" of the Church, each of which contradicts the others if pursued exclusively. Thus, it is claimed, if you rely too exclusively on the model of the Church as an hierarchical society, you do violence to the complementary nature of the Church as (invisible) spiritual communion or as "charismatic" fellowship. (A reputation for sage moderation is cheaply obtained by balancing this statement with the parallel observation that, of course, if you rely too exclusively on the charismatic "model", you will overlook the Church's very real hierarchical dimension, etc.). Once this plurality of valid "models" has been granted, it is

easy for a Father Avery Dulles or a Father Richard McBrien to claim that Pius XII's ecclesiology was only one way of reconciling the competing claims of these different models. Another way might be equally true — and better adapted to our habits of thinking today. Thus the way is opened for as many new "concepts" of the Church as there are theologians to conceive them or cultures to differentiate them or epochs to "rethink" them.

But, as of July 5th, 1973, with the public release of *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, it must be evident to all that the post-conciliar "breather" is at an end. Unconvinced despite ten years of unparalleled salesmanship on the part of the theological "liberals", heirs to the New Theology, Rome has manifested a determination to repeat and reinforce the norms laid down in *Humani Generis*. It is a most historic decision, writing *finis* as clearly as anything could to the whole tissue of assumptions which defined theology in recent years.

Unity and Identity of Christ's Church

The first chapter of *Mysterium Ecclesiae* takes up the subject of the unity of the Church, but this issue is quickly and inevitably transformed into that of the identity of the Church. I say "inevitably" because, in fact, no-one really denies that the Church is one. This is why the priests and bishops (I could mention names) who ask people to pray for the "unity of the Church" are just sloppy about language. It is every bit as superfluous to pray for the unity of the Church as it is to pray for the trinity of God, and these men are surely aware of so elementary a fact. No one seriously denies that unity is an essential mark of the Church, like sanctity, catholicity, and apostolicity — a mark which simply cannot be lost and has not been lost. People may be asked to pray for the unity of Christians, of course, but that is another matter — just as the sanctity of individual Christians is a different matter from the inalienable sanctity of Holy Church.

So the question is not whether the Church is one, but where the Church is to be found. Once that identification has been made, it is possible to see what kind of unity the Church in fact possesses. In order to answer this question as to the identity of the Church, *Mysterium Ecclesiae* repeats a key

sentence from Vatican II: "And this Church of Christ, constituted and organised in this world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the Successor of Peter and the bishops in union with that Successor" (*"atque haec Christi Ecclesia, in hoc mundo ut societas constituta et ordinata, subsistit in Ecclesia catholica, a Successore Petri et Episcopis in eius communione gubernata"*). — *Lumen Gentium*, para. 8.

The meaning of this Conciliar formula is absolutely clear to anyone who takes seriously the technical force of the verb "subsists".

What does it mean for a thing to "subsist"? Let me illustrate by a few homely examples:

Your wife says to you, "Honey, buy me some green for my birthday."

"Some what?"

"Some green."

"What are you talking about? Some green what? Do you want a green dress, green wallpaper, or what?"

"No, dear" she says, "just some green". And, of course, you call an ambulance. The elementary fact on which your wife has lost her grip is this: green does not subsist. Dresses, wallpaper — these things subsist, but not qualities such as colours. Qualities have to belong to something: they can exist only "in" another. In other words, qualities exist but do not sub-sist.

Second homely example: Feminine beauty is certainly real and exists with interesting variations in many individual women. But feminine beauty does not subsist. If it did, we could put Miss Ewig Weibliche on the stage, swimwear-clad, to take the Miss America contest by storm.

Third example: Human nature is present in all human beings. But human nature as such does not subsist. If it did, you could shake its hand at a cocktail party.

Fourth example: A blazing bonfire is pure heat. If ten boys get too close to the fire, they become hot, but they do not become "heat". They participate in heat, but only the fire is heat. Only the fire is subsistent heat.

Now the Roman Catholic Church, according to Vatican II, is subsistent churchiness. The nature of the "Church" is not like human nature or feminine beauty then. It does not exist "in" a number of different individuals. Rather, it subsists all

by itself and precisely as such, in the Roman Catholic Church. The only way some other organisation can be in any degree Christian or "churchy", therefore, is by participating in what Roman Catholicism uniquely is.

Now suppose a crackerbarrel philosopher came along and said: "Look, everything which is hot is in some degree fire. So I'm going to broaden the definition of fire to include the ten overheated boys. They plus the bonfire, in your fourth example, now constitute the total reality of the fire". This is exactly what the authors condemned by *Mysterium Ecclesiae* have tried to do with the definition of Church. They have tried to make it include everything which is in any degree "churchy". The result is inevitably some sort of branch theory or concentric-circle theory of the Church. But this is precisely what the Faithful are forbidden to hold. As the new document puts it:— "The followers of Christ are, therefore, not permitted to imagine that Christ's Church is nothing more than a collection (divided but still possessing a certain unity) of Churches and ecclesiae". This is the first of the five propositions formally reprobated in *Mysterium Ecclesiae*. It should be noted that all five of these propositions are simply declared "not permitted" without any more precise theological censure being added as to whether the impermissible proposition is heretical, erroneous, temerarious, or just what. In this respect, the procedure of the Sacred Congregation in *Mysterium Ecclesiae* is exactly the same as in *Lamentabili*, the decree of 1907 in which 65 Modernist propositions were "reprobated and proscribed" without further theological censure.

The Roman Catholic Church is the Church

The point is that there is no collection of denominations or bodies calling themselves "churches" to which one may legitimately point and say, "This is the Church". It doesn't matter which bodies you put into the collection and which you leave out; it doesn't matter whether you say the Church is just the Roman Catholics and the Eastern Orthodox, or whether you adopt the old Anglican three-branch theory (which was condemned as far back as 1864: C of D-S. 2885-8), or whether you propose to include every sect which has ever

arisen; the composition doesn't matter for the simple reason that there is no such collection. (1)

Let me state the same thing in terms of "parts". I can say that the Pope is "part" of the Church but not the whole Church. I can say that the Archdiocese of Washington is "part" of the Church but not the whole. I can say that the churches observing the Latin rite (as opposed to the Byzantine) are "part" of the Church, but not the whole. However, I can never say that the Roman Catholic Church is just "part" of the whole Church. That body which is governed by the Pope and the bishops in communion with him simply and totally is the Church.

To go back to my example of the ten boys playing around the bonfire. Depending on how close they stand to the flames, they may be hotter or colder. The hotter they get, the more they owe to the fire, just as Vatican II and *Mysterium Ecclesiae* say of the other Christian denominations. These denominations possess many elements of "truth and sanctification" garnered from the ancient heritage of the Church, but they are not the Church, just as the boys are not the fire. There is only one way to become the fire, and that is to cast oneself into it. There is only one way to become the Church, and that is to join it, to throw oneself into the only subsistent fire of Christ's love, which will burn until the end of time, a living holocaust to the Father.

What Vatican II meant, then, by analogously applying the language of "subsistence" to the relation between the true Church of Christ and the Roman Catholic Church, is quite clear in itself. Those theologians who missed this meaning and tried to suggest that the true Church might "subsist" in more than one visible Church have been undercut by this first condemned proposition. However, other theologians of dubious orthodoxy must have grasped the implications of the subsistence-language more clearly. They realised that, as soon as the true Church in its fullest sense has been said to "subsist" somewhere, their own more "inclusive" ecclesiology is doomed. Thus they had to devise a different error.

The "Pilgrim Church"

Suppose, one were to say that the Church on earth is always in a pilgrim state. Here on earth she but yearns for her true homeland and never achieves the perfection which

is promised to her above. In other words, the Church - in - the - fullest - sense is an eschatological reality, not a temporal one. From this point of departure, one could go on to conclude that there is a genuine sense in which it is impossible to point to any temporal, visible organisation and say, "This is the Church". Rather, every ostensible church is a pilgrim-church, a becoming-church, a being - towards - the Church - but - not - yet - the - Church.

The Church of Christ Exists To-day

From that perverse logic comes the second proposition condemned in this chapter of *Mysterium Ecclesiae*:

"Nor are they (the Faithful) free to hold that Christ's Church nowhere really exists today and that it is to be considered only as an end which all Churches and ecclesial communities must strive to reach" (*Christi Ecclesiam hodie iam nullibi vere subsistere, ita ut nonnisi finis existimanda sit, quem omnes Ecclesiae et communitates quaerere debeant*). Those who read Latin will note that the original is somewhat clearer than the official translation (quoted above) in that it uses the technical term *subsistere* instead of *existere*, as the translation would lead one to expect. Even so, of course, the meaning is perfectly obvious.

By condemning both these propositions back-to-back, *Mysterium Ecclesiae* makes it clear that Rome will not accept any formula which posits a distinct Church - behind - the - visible - Church (2). Whether this mysterius Church - behind - the - Church is conceived of as subsisting invisibly behind a cluster of denominations, or whether it is thought of as beckoning from the future, the mischief is the same. In each case, the Church - behind - the - Church is projected as a way to avoid the dogmatic consequences of Catholic teaching, specifically the teaching that the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ on earth, is simply and precisely that society over which the Pope and those bishops in communion with him — just those and no other bishops — rule.

FOOTNOTES

(1) The scheme *De Ecclesia*, prepared for Vatican Council I but never voted on because of the interruption of the Council by the outbreak of Franco-Prussian hostilities, contained a draft canon which made just the same point as *Mysterium Ecclesiae*. It read as follows: "If anyone should say that the true Church is not intrinsically one body but consists of various and separate societies bearing the Christian name and is diffused through them, or that various societies in mutual disagreement on the profession of the Faith and divided from each other in communion act as branches or part to make up the one and universal Church of

Christ, let him be anathema." *Si quis dixerit veram Ecclesiam non esse unum in se corpus sed ex variis dissitisque christiani nominis societatibus constare, per easque diffusam esse; aut varias societates ab invicem fidei professione dissidentes atque communione sejunctas, tamquam membra vel partes unam et universalem constituere Christi Ecclesiam: Anathema sit.*

(2) It may be well to note at this point that the tenor of *Mysterium Ecclesiae* though not its precise wording, casts suspicion on yet another prominent modern theory of the Church, namely the one which treats the Church almost univocally as a "Sacrament". Everyone grants that the Church is in some respects like a Sacrament (that is, by analogy), since its reality is both visible and invisible, and since the visible Church is precisely as such a "means" of grace. But to treat the Church univocally as a Sacrament, as Karl Rahner seems to do, among others, (cf. his "Membership of the Church", in *Theological Investigations* II, pp. 1-88), almost necessarily involves making the invisible reality a different thing from the visible, just as the grace of a sacrament (its *res*¹) is a different thing from the outward sign as such. As a result, two realities, objectively connected, to be sure, yet really distinct and hence separately treatable theologically, come into view. And what is this reified, invisible reality but yet another projection of a "Church - behind - the - Church," a phantom being, waiting to attract predicates that cannot be plausibly attached to the visible Church, such as the membership of material heretics?

(to be continued)

"THE FORM HOW TO CELEBRATE THE LORD'S SUPPER"

"The outward preparation, the more simple it is, the better it is, and the nearer unto the institution of Christ and His Apostles. If the minister have bread, wine, a table, and a fair table-cloth, let him not be solicitous nor careful for the rest, seeing they be no things brought in by Christ, but by Popes, unto whom, if the King's Majesty and his honorable Council have good conscience, they must be restored again; and great shame it is for a noble king, emperor or magistrate, contrary unto God's word, to detain and keep from the devil or his minister any of their goods or treasure, as candles, vestments, crosses, altars! For if they be kept in the Church as things indifferent, at length they will be maintained as things necessary." — John Hooper, Protestant Bishop of Gloucester preaching, Lent 1550, before the King and his Court.

Vatican II Liturgists: More Intolerant than John Knox

ARCHBISHOP ROBERT J. DWYER

NATURE, the principle is succinctly stated, abhors a vacuum. Or, to phrase it as did the worldly-wise Horace in his Epistle, "Heave nature out with a pitchfork, yet she is back before you can blink an eye." Or words to that effect. This simple truth, which requires no psychologist's laboured demonstration, the liturgical reformers of our day have sublimely overlooked; with results, however, which will be with us for long years to come, or until a wiser and more sober breed of liturgists will come along to undo the folly of their elders.

For the liturgists of the Post-Vatican II era, being Puritans of a stripe and density far surpassing John Knox in intolerance and Praisegod Barebones in wrath, have succeeded in stripping the Church of the ministry of beauty and in depriving the faithful of the safety-valve of a controlled emotional outlet.

The result is not unlike that which followed the victory of Puritanism in England in the 17th century, or in New England in the 18th, an outburst of emotionalism run wild and a widespread disillusionment and distaste for the institutional Church.

Civilized man requires the ministry of art. To deprive him of great literature, or sublime music, or splendid architecture, or the beauty of the plastic arts, is to maim and cripple him as a human being. He may survive for a while, "living and half-living," but only by leading a kind of semi-barbarous existence, his soul starving for those things which enoble him and lift him out of the primordial mire.

Preeminently is this true of man as a religious being. For

his worship of God, in addition to the adhesion of his intellect and the obedience of his will, he requires the best that the arts can bring to make his prayer take wing and his liturgy truly come alive.

This has always been the case. Following his higher instincts man has always enriched his acts of religion, his liturgy, by the employment of his artistic talent and genius. He has phrased his prayer in the noblest language his tongue can frame; he has lifted his voice in praise in music at once thrilling and purifying; he has made his temples or cathedrals the supreme expression of his power as a builder; he has endowed his images with the most perfect form his chisel can achieve; he has painted his saints as though sharing their vision of glory.

Whenever he has failed to do this he has suffered and religion has suffered; as when he has turned to materialism or atheism, or when he has tried to persuade himself that he can worship God adequately as a naked soul face to face with the Ultimate, and has found that he is merely talking to himself.

This, we say, the liturgical Puritans have forgotten or ignored. They have reduced liturgical language, at least in the vernacular, to the utmost depths of banality, so that anyone in the least sensitive to the beauties of English prose or poetry must cringe every time he goes to Mass or reads the Sacred Scriptures in the translation unhappily approved by the American Bishops' Conference for the edification of the faithful. Where once our ears were attuned to the eloquent phrasing of the Douai Version or the monumental work of the late Monsignor Knox, now they are assaulted by a version so pedestrian as to suggest that the presidential speech-writers must have had a hand in the business.

Music we have debased so crassly as to eliminate the last vestige of its sacred character; worse, we have robbed it even of any kind of secular dignity, so that it is good neither for the sanctuary or the music-hall. Church architecture has taken on all the endearing qualities of the local Safeway Store minus whatever it has of incidental interest.

And in banishing by absolute fiat all decoration from the sanctuary we have outdone the 17th century Puritans at their own game. They at least had some appreciation of proportion, grace and interior dignity, and they preserved

intact the "organ roll" of the King James' version of the Sacred Text.

Destruction

But what is of equal or even greater seriousness than the elimination of the ministry of art from the Post-Vatican II liturgy is the concomitant destruction of practically all of those liturgical or paraliturgical celebrations which for centuries on end provided the faithful with some kind of a safety-valve for the legitimate release of their emotions.

We speak of such things as Pontifical High Mass, with its stately, slow-moving ceremony, its deliberate pageantry, its emphasis, not on the persons or personalities of the ministers, but on the tremendous significance of the action they were performing: the richness of vestments covering for the time the poverty of our nature, the glory of music proclaiming the praise of the Most High, the eloquence of the Latin tongue, understood in substance by all present and delighted in as rising above the very ordinariness of the vernacular.

We speak of Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, with the altar ablaze with candles, to the awed wonder of our youthful eyes, a wonder which never fully wore off however often the ritual was repeated in the days when we were a convent chaplain. We speak of the Forty Hours and First Friday holy hours, of Lenten Stations of the Cross, of the Rosary recited by the congregation, of Vespers sung, however imperfectly, on a Sunday afternoon. We speak of the beauty of God's house and the place where his glory dwelleth.

'All Swept Away'

All gone now, all swept away, or so nearly so as to make small difference. The liturgical Puritans have had their way, and the Holy See has not curbed their fanatic zeal. So the Church is an empty Safeway Store, the altar a butcher's block, and the vestments are all being discarded by the Now Generation. One of the immediate and obvious results, of course, is the precipitous falling-off in Mass attendance.

Father Andrew Greeley's celebrated Institute for Exposing What's Wrong with the Church pronounces that

this decline is primarily due to Pope Paul's Encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, a conclusion which is contradicted by the experience of every pastor in the land who has his finger on the pulse of the faithful. He knows that it is due to boredom, distaste, and a vague sense that the glory has departed.

Opposite Reaction

But more: Is not the wave of unbridled emotionalism now sweeping the Church and threatening to loose her from her moorings a direct reaction to the iron hand of this liturgical Puritanism? Religious emotion must have an outlet. In itself it is a legitimate expression of man's deepest feelings, which, if utterly restrained, break out in extreme and bizarre forms, like the convulsionaries of Saint-Medard in 18th century Paris or the Penitentes of New Mexico. If the Church fails to provide tested and sound outlets for religious emotion, it will seek some other vent, with results that can be extremely harmful to religion itself.

For excessive emotional expression is always followed by an opposite reaction, usually in the form of disillusionment and disgust. Unmistakable signs of this reaction have already been widely observed here in America in consequence of the emotional hysteria which has been whipped up over the past decade. Nothing to be wondered at; the pattern is as old as man's religious experience.

In frontier America of a century ago the emotional excesses of the Camp Meeting almost invariably were followed by lapse into religious indifference or even worse.

The Church as a wise mother had devised her liturgy and her paraliturgical devotions in such a way as to provide a safe balance, insisting always on the great primary objects of worship, the knowledge and praise of God and humble conformity to his will, with sufficient though not excessive outlets for the emotions.

The liturgical Puritans have upset that balance. It will be a job of work to restore it.

In this last letter, Father Crane takes issue with Bishop Butler over the vernacular and the Mass, the past achievement of the Church in the social field and what he describes as the Bishop's bogus horizontalism.

CURRENT COMMENT

Letter to Bishop Butler: 3

THE EDITOR

My Lord,

I have to try in this letter to complete what has to be said with regard to the passage in your letter to Thomas, which I took up last month. I think, for the convenience of readers, I had better cite it again. Here it is:

"I think, you know, that instinctively you want still today as was relatively possible yesterday (if one was not a theologian), to have a Catholicism which you can swallow whole and indiscriminately: a Mass in a language not understood by the people, with rubrics that contradicted the genuine tenor of the very words of the rite itself; a liturgical decor that was beautiful and archaic but rarely seen to advantage in our parish churches; a creed and catechism that were easy to memorise and didn't need to be understood; a Church that stood by the wayside while the world pursued its suffering pilgrimage; a haven of peace that was not a challenge to living reflection on one's religion or to the gross evils of a capitalist and technocratic civilization; a Europeanised (but also largely mediaeval) version of the

Gospel that only converted the non-Europeans by detaching them from their native cultures."

Vernacular and the Mass

I begin with the Mass and, clearly, what I said in my previous article about traditional devotion and liturgy applies to that supreme liturgical act, which is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. But there is need for emphasis in the context of the vernacular which you raise here; emphasis on the fact, of which you seem to be oblivious, that, at Mass, a man understands and worships not wholly with his mind, but with the whole of himself. The process is not one of abstract calculation, as with a mathematical problem, but of participation in Supreme Sacrifice, which calls for the devotion of the whole of a man's self and, in consequence, the play of sense and feel on mind and heart. The vernacular, I would suggest, is irrelevant here. Men knew before its coming what was going on at Mass. The simplest of them knew, though they could not understand one word of Latin; and they were helped to know — strange though this may seem to the rationally-minded — by the very fact that the Mass itself was in a language they did not understand; helped, because the sense of awe and mystery, of continuity and tradition, created by the words which their Fathers had heard before them, lit their understanding and lifted up their hearts. This is what the Latin heritage did for the masses at Mass. This, I venture to say, is what the vernacular has taken away. Rational understanding is not the route that leads to "sursum corda". At Mass, the heart has its reasons. It is these that the vernacular has taken away.

The Killing of Devotion

It is the same with the whole surround of the Mass; what you call in the passage cited the "liturgical decor". Everything that went with it; all that had been built round the Mass lovingly and with care over the years and that bore witness to a timeless, yet living tradition. Bells and candles and flowers, incense and vestments and rubrics, fixed over the ages with great care. These caught at us as we knelt to

pray at Mass; fixed us on the sacrifice of God's Son to God, made present on our altars by the priest who stood before us and with his back to us, facing the Sacrifice. The Mass was not something we worked out; it was something into which we grew — with reverence and love building up within us over the years — as you no doubt grew into Downside from the moment you first stepped within its gracious bounds. You would be lost, no doubt, My Lord, and your brethren there would have been lost if, overnight, the place had been pulled down over your ears and you had been ordered to live in wattle huts in the interests of a return to early origins. Despite our faults and our failings we knew what we were about at Mass; the most illiterate among us knew — probably better than anyone else. For us the Mass was a well-loved thing that would never leave us. We could not imagine its liturgy being otherwise than it was; our Churches being other than they were; the language our forefathers refused to pray in on the scaffold being thrust into our Churches. But the language our Fathers prayed in before being hanged and drawn and quartered has gone from our churches and the liturgy as we knew it until a few years ago has gone and the going of both has left us desolate and many close to despair. Try as they may to reconcile themselves to the change that has come, many Catholics cannot. What they sense, I fear, in a way you and your colleagues do not understand, is that the heritage of their Fathers has been stripped away from them. And they cannot, for the life of them, see why.

Please do not consider their case lightly, My Lord. It would be a mistake if you did that. And please do not think that Catholics who feel this way are few in number. What you saw round Archbishop Lefebvre last summer was only the tip of the iceberg. There are more Catholics, many more who think this way than you think. And there are amongst them many young as well as old. And the young, as well as the old, feel terribly the poverty of the new liturgy, the dullness — running to plain awfulness at times — of the vernacular and the bareness of the new churches, stripped in so many cases of the dear, familiar things which we used to love, with Our Lord (I refuse to call Him "the Lord") consigned, as I wrote last month, to a hole in the wall and His Blessed Mother (I refuse to call her "the Virgin") pushed well out of sight and no candles to light in front of her. I'm fast getting to the stage

now where I no longer want to go in to Catholic churches, especially new ones. They are getting more and more to look like Methodist Meeting Halls, fit for Praise-God-Barebones and his pals, but suited in no way to the incarnate religion, which Catholicism either is or it is nothing at all. For it is not merely the intellectuals, but the neo-Manichees amongst them who appear to me to have struck at the Church's liturgy and at the interior of her churches in these post-conciliar days. There seems so little in either at the moment to raise the mind and heart to God; nothing but dullness and drabness; not a glimmer of light or a gleam of colour; nothing, really, to draw one to Christ and His Mother, no joy in the Word made Flesh; no more than a functional arrangement in aid of rational calculation. And how on earth, My Lord, do you catch Mrs. Bloggs with that? I would answer that, if she's done anything at all in answer to what the post-conciliar liturgists think they've done for her, she's gone all pentecostalist. For, at the heart of this movement, there lies an urge, I believe, to recapture something of the joy and the colour the old liturgy once gave us and which has now been lost. In its day, indeed, as you note, it may not have been seen to advantage in all our Churches; but at least it was recognizable as the praise of God. This can hardly be said of a good many present performances, some of which are at the level of no more than a humanitarian picnic. I have the feeling that you might agree with me here.

Memory, Understanding and the Catechism

I confess I don't quite see what you are getting at when you talk of "a creed and a catechism that were easy to memorise and didn't have to be understood". Of course, they needed to be understood. Surely you are not making a dichotomy between memory on the one hand and understanding on the other. The whole point here is that the two are complementary and that the former is an invaluable aid to the latter, as those who were brought up under the old system know full well. Certainly, a very legitimate complaint, which I have brought frequently in the past, is that, too often, in those days, Religious Instruction consisted of nothing but by-heart. The process stopped there and far too little was left to the understanding. That was certainly a defect. The

foundations laid by the magnificent old Penny Catechism deserved far better than that; they should have been built on far more effectively and carefully than was in fact the case. At the same time, it is very well worth noting that those brought up on that wonderful compendium of the Faith and little more moved, nevertheless, with the years into a deeper and deeper understanding of it—a feel for it that never left them—as Grace did its work in their hearts, working through a well-tried devotional and liturgical heritage that they recognised increasingly and instinctively, with the passing of the years, as part and parcel of their Catholic being. That was the system, My Lord; and the thing to note is that it was a system. Now there is none. The old system had its defects; every system does. Now there are no defects because there is no system. There is just a mess. There was no mess before. The old system, for all its defects, preserved the Faith in this country and gave it wondrous increase. In confirmation, look at the figures; at things as they were in England and Wales when Vatican II was called. By contrast, look at them now and ask yourself whether the present depressing picture, fifteen years later, has anything to do with the overnight uprooting of traditional ways that followed, not necessarily because of, but in the wake of the second Vatican Council and the substitution for those traditional ways of a secularized approach to the Faith that relied far too much on rational calculation and hardly at all on the Grace of God; whose motto was not “Credo ut intelligam”, but “Intelligo ut credam”. Because of this catechetical inversion — the substitution of a shoddy humanism for the Faith of our Fathers — Religious Instruction has fallen flat on its face and the wreckage of the Faith is all about its fall. Your approach to this whole question, My Lord, appears to me to leave no room for Matt Talbot, the ex-alcoholic, none for Saint Benedict Joseph Labre, who died a flea-ridden beggar on the steps of a Roman basilica, none for Bernadette, the peasant girl, none for the Little Flower, who started life in a prissy, petit-bourgeois background cluttered up with pieties. For all these holy folk, you see, are of the heart. They are very simple. They are the Church. They work primarily by Faith. For them rational calculation is out; and so it should be. It is this that you and your fellow intellectuals appear not to be able to understand.

I do not really expect you to do so. What I do lament is that so much of the conciliar reform in so many places has been given "effect" at your hands. Forgive me, but I am quite sure that the mess stems largely from this fact. I do not expect you to see this. You will probably be somewhat hurt at what I have written. Nonetheless, I have to write it — because I am quite sure it is true.

The Church after the French Revolution

As for your concept of the pre-conciliar Church as standing "by the wayside whilst the world pursued its suffering pilgrimage", I am forced to comment — I am afraid, somewhat angrily — that the picture you present here is not merely grossly inaccurate and unbalanced, but insulting. Inaccurate and unbalanced because oblivious, apparently, of the enormous amount that was done before the Council; insulting to the men and the women who did it. I hardly know where to begin. Even so, I ought to say something by way of preliminary. It is that Europe in the nineteenth century (going back no further than the French Revolution at the end of the eighteenth) was the enemy of the Church; in this sense, that its official class, infected by Liberal Rationalism, itself the legacy of that Revolution, consigned the Church to the sacristy and did its utmost to keep it there. It is very important to be clear on this point. By and large the Church was excluded from public life during the whole of this time. She was not wanted there. Neither was she wanted for the education of the young. As a purveyor of "superstition" she was out where rationally-calculating, nineteenth-century Europe — with its pathetic belief in the sovereignty of reason — was concerned. As a result, the Church during this period had to struggle constantly to educate her own young in the elements of their religion and to get through to a suffering world whose anti-clerical official class did its utmost to confine her to the sacristy. This, My Lord, is history, plain fact. Your apparent ignorance of it shocks me profoundly and I can only recommend that you put yourself right on this matter without delay. Given the circumstances outlined above, to charge the Church (fighting to break out of the sacristy into which anti-clerical public authority had shoved her) with standing by the wayside whilst the suffering world

went to blazes, is rather like strapping a sprinter to his starting-blocks and then, some seconds later, solemnly ticking him off for not winning his race.

The Nineteenth-Century Break-Out

This said — and it had to be said, My Lord, in the interests of elementary justice — let me point out that, despite the fearful and almost universal handicap of state antipathy, the Church *did*, in fact, break out during the nineteenth century in two directions, if I may put it that way. In Europe, in the persons, for example, of Frederick Ozanam, founder of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Don Bosco, with his poor boys and a host of others; not least, the magnificent Irish clergy who came to this country to minister to the Irish poor who were driven here by the thousand at the time of the potato famine. Despite all obstacles, the Church in the nineteenth century, My Lord, did anything but stand by "whilst the world pursued its suffering pilgrimage". That you should make such a charge fills me, I confess, with anger.

But it was perhaps in the Mission Field — particularly during the hundred years that preceded the Second Vatican Council — that the Church put forward a thrust on behalf of the poor and the oppressed that has rarely been equalled in the whole of her history. I cannot go into details here; but I wonder if you realise that, during this time, amongst other things, she effectively opened up the entire African Continent. The same can be said of the Far East and the South Pacific. This was the golden age of the Missions. I was fortunate enough to be allowed a quick glance at its tail-end in one particular corner of Africa at the end of 1958 and the beginning of 1959. I shall never forget what I saw; nor the happiness that swelled within me whilst I travelled the length and breadth of my corner of East Africa. I knew then what the Church was as I have never known it since, nor shall ever know it again. For you and, I venture to say, others who think as you do, have spoilt it now — maybe forever. In the wake of the Council the missionary effort was killed. A mentality has come that will lose a great deal of all that was gained during that hundred years. Again, a Church delivered up to "experts", intellectuals and commissions — strapped down with the trappings of democratic centralism — whose wrong-

headed theorizing has made a howling mess of this all-important sector of her work.

First, the Kingdom of God and His Justice

You might remark at this juncture, My Lord — and, I am afraid, it would do you little credit if you did — that the benefits conferred during this time were essentially spiritual. Of course they were; so what? Thank God they were, for this is what the Church is all about; this is what her primary mission is — to preach the Gospel, and this is what her missionaries did in the first place and which I only wish they were doing now instead of attempting to turn themselves into somewhat shop-soiled social workers; which ploy, incidentally, the people on the spot see through at once. But, of course, the basically spiritual mission, which the Church accomplished so well during that hundred years, brought immense material benefits, as is always the case. It had to for, where Catholicism came Grace flowed and, where Grace flows, the first beginnings of justice and stability come to a people's public and social life. (Or are you, perhaps, taken up with Karl Rahner's "anonymous Christians"? If you are, My Lord, I could take you to places in Africa where, I think, both you and Karl Rahner would be forced to think again on this matter. You would see then how the thing has worked out in practice. It is illustrated by what they say now in Brazil and probably elsewhere: "Provided you're fed, the priests don't care if you go to Hell".) And what greater benefits can there be in the order of social and civic morality and therefore, material well-being than justice and stability? These the missionaries brought to the missionary lands and yet you seem to imply that, during the high-point of this extraordinary missionary endeavour, the Church was standing aside where the material well-being of the poor of the world was concerned. Believe me, My Lord, it was involved during this time as Helder Camara and other contemporary "heroes" of the third-world revolution (whatever that may be) have never been involved in their lives. Incidentally, with regard to Bishop Camara, why, when I see his name or read his speeches, is he always away from his country and abroad.

And finally, of course, where this matter of the Missions

is concerned, the rest of what you might call the material-betterment side of things came as it always has and will come in the wake of those who seek first "the kingdom of God and his justice" and not "ongoing revolution" or any ill-judged sociological and political nonsense like that. The rest is always added to genuine, dedicated and holy missionary work, which has its priorities right. Schools and clinics and hospitals and roads and co-operatives and teachers training colleges and seminaries and convents — the lot. I've seen it all and the devotion that went with it has amazed me beyond words. But all these came — let me repeat it — *in the wake of those who sought first the kingdom of God*. It must always be like that. Reverse the order, My Lord; go off and prattle about the need for removing "oppressive structures", turn your missionary primarily into a provider of material benefits and then your missions will flop, as they are beginning to flop now for that very reason. If you are thinking here, My Lord, in the popular post-conciliar and disastrous terms of today, if you are here in this passage chiding the Church for not making her first concern, in the Missions and elsewhere, the material uplift of mankind, then I would have to say, with regret, but truly, that you are, by implication, asking her to sell her soul for a mess of pottage; to do the devil's work as some on the missions are doing that now pretty well, I can tell you. The Church's concern for mankind can only be through concern for the things of God; her love for men because of her love of God, never by way of substitute for it.

Uneasy at Your Tone

As a matter of fact, I do not believe you would dispute this point of view. I do not see how you can. I am sure that here, as elsewhere, you are prepared — in face of contemporary horizontalism within the Church — to insist on the primacy of the spiritual. Having said this, I must say, nevertheless, that I feel uneasy at your tone here and still more uneasy when I read a moment later in the passage under consideration about "a Europeanised (but also largely medieval) version of the Gospel that only converted the non-Europeans by detaching them from their native cultures".

Why "only"? In the last analysis, would you not prefer to be converted to the Faith at the price of your culture, then

retain your culture and remain without the Faith. Which one are you for, My Lord? If the Faith for you is "a pearl of great price", as it should be, for which alternative must you be? What, then, are you getting at here, My Lord? Quite frankly, I don't like your "only". Neither, of course, do I approve of detaching people from what you call "native cultures"; but what are these, in so many cases, if you will pardon my ignorance? You will remember, perhaps, what Winston Churchill replied when one of his naval aides told him during the last war that a proposed line of action was contrary to the tradition of the Navy? I won't give you the answer here. I think we will leave it at that — except for one thought. Please answer me this — if you and your episcopal colleagues everywhere are so keen on preserving what you call the culture of developing countries as a setting for the Faith, why have you ripped away, with the Tridentine Mass, what was undoubtedly an immensely significant part of the cultural heritage of the West? Why, My Lord? Or is it a matter of one law for the Medes and another for the Persians? And, if so, why? Or did you and your colleagues on the episcopal benches throughout the Church never think of this one? You ought to have done so, you know, for the point made here is staggeringly valid.

Why not a Haven of Peace

And, lastly, that bit in our passage where you appear to give poor Thomas a bit of the old "tut, tut, tut" for wanting the Church to be a "haven of peace" rather than "a challenge to living reflection on one's religion or to the gross evils of a capitalistic and technocratic civilization". If I may say so with respect, My Lord, you can tell that to Mrs. Bloggs and ask her what she makes of it; and you can tell it, too, to any young mother who takes her children into Church to pay a visit in the middle of a shopping round, or to the old folk you will still find telling their beads, thank God, in front of the statue of Our Lady (packed away in a corner, of course, from its once familiar place) or to city workers who drop in at lunch hour to places like Corpus Christi, Maiden Lane or Farm Street; you can ask them if they go there seeking a challenge to living reflection on their religion, whatever that may mean, or a further challenge to what you call so

indiscriminately and, if I may say so, with such ignorance, "the gross evils of a capitalist and technocratic civilization". Do they go in for either of these two obscure reasons, which you have conjured up, or in that loving encounter, however stumbling and inept, to find the one thing the world cannot give them — the thing which they want most of all — which is the peace of Christ. This is precisely what they do want to find in their Church, My Lord; the very opposite, apparently, of that which you would have them find — a haven of peace. And they are right to want it and you, My Lord, are wrong, absolutely wrong, to want them not to find it; but to console themselves, instead, not with their God, but with some sort of sociological challenge, which religion in your somewhat strained view is meant to provide to capitalist abuse and technocratic civilization. This, quite frankly, is stuff and nonsense; bogus horizontalism run mad; the left-over in your own mind, perhaps, of the almost unintelligible outpourings of the *Slant* group, which ceased to afflict us, if I remember rightly, almost a decade ago; the kind of stuff Sheed and Ward published in the immediate wake of the Council and, deservedly, nearly went bankrupt in doing so — unintelligible guff of no quality whatsoever.

Bogus Horizontalism

In conclusion, may I say, My Lord, that I am amazed, frankly shocked, that anyone of your intellectual calibre — and a Bishop to boot — should write in this fashion; that, for you, the Church's mission should appear so far removed from the supernatural as not to allow her children to find in her that peace which is their hearts desire; but that, instead, you would want them to find in their Church no more than a challenge to what you think of as contemporary economic and social evil. This, I repeat, is not merely bogus horizontalism run mad, but dangerously mad. It appears to me to reveal, if I may say so with respect, not merely your distance from the great mass of your Catholic brethren, but the extent to which your own outlook has become desupernaturalised. All you appear to be able to offer the Faithful in these days of travail for us all is a Church whose main function is to serve as a challenge to economic abuse. What outrageous rubbish is this! Don't tell that to Mrs. Bloggs, My Lord. Tell it, instead, to

the Marines. Forgive me. That is a little cruel; but you asked for it, My Lord, and I had to give it to you. I have given it the more readily in the realization that the mentality displayed in your letter to Thomas appears to me as coterminous with that at present laying waste the Church.

GREGORIAN CHANT

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We are pleased and proud to publish this speech by John Biggs-Davison, a Catholic father of six children and M.P. for Epping Forest. It was delivered at a Rally organised by the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child at Chelmsford City Football Club Stadium, Essex on Sunday, November 7th, 1976. Other rallies were held under the auspices of SPUC in England and Scotland on that day. In all, they were attended by at least 60,000 people.

Abortion is Despair

JOHN BIGGS-DAVISON, M.P.

ABORTION is despair. Abortion is excused by selfish standards and false priorities. Abortion is failure — the failure of pastors, parents and teachers to instil a sense of moral responsibility; the failure of politicians and administrators in housing and social welfare. The sins of fathers are visited upon the unborn children. Unborn — but children. Not, as abortionists argue, useless tissue as expendable as a tonsil, an appendix or a gallstone. Each and every one of them is a being identifiable by a unique genetic code, dependent upon, but separate from, the mother; and we who are Christians have received from Jewry the truth that each is a being made in the image of God.

To apply an Abortion Act to the deficiencies of social policy, social services and private help is like finding not enough hats to go round and sending not for the hatter but the headsman. The Abortion Act has diverted scarce resources and thus damaged the National Health Service. Within that Service unwilling surgeons are coerced, gynaecologists of decency and distinction are denied posts and promotion; and the consciences of nurses are forced or tormented by reluctance to throw extra duty upon colleagues. Don't take my word for it: study the Lane Report and the evidence given our Select Committee.

The British birth rate is going down, and there are cold reasons of expediency for State and society to encourage fruitful and responsible parenthood. Planners should surely recoil from the prospect of a dwindling proportion of earners keeping a surplus of aged. It is a prospect that lends momentum to the campaign to legalise euthanasia. Abortion is euthanasia before the fact. Professor H. C. McLaren once described it as "pre-natal euthanasia". Euthanasia is, in a sense, more rational. For the full potential of the unborn is unknown or uncertain. Why not see how they come out and turn out? On purely eugenic indications, Beethoven should have been aborted. The Abortion Act, carried on a wave of public ignorance, has its "social clause". No doubt there were "social reasons" why a certain peasant girl in Palestine two thousand years ago should not have become a mother!

Doubtless the campaign for abortion was inspired by concern and compassion. Yet those who ran and supported it disqualified themselves in logic and are morally incompetent to resist demands for euthanasia. When individuals, relying on polls and statistics or on their own desires, impulses and convenience, become their own judge of right and wrong, moral and social anarchy result. Man is a mystery. To trivialise that mystery, to treat human life as of little consequence, is to make human society inhuman. Some may call it freedom to resolve personal and social problems without giving human life at every stage of its existence the absolute respect that is its due. But freedom is emptied of all value if it degrades and brutalises. As for any connection between easy abortion and women's liberation, the effect has been to make women more than before into chattels and toys of masculine pleasure.

The counsellor and social worker, the doctor and nurse, when confronted by a pregnancy, are confronted by two human beings, each with a claim upon their wisdom, experience and compassion. Philosophy may have dethroned theology; but only at mortal peril do we allow sociology to override the natural and moral law. For my part, I have opposed all pro-abortion legislation, starting with Mr.

Kenneth Robinson's Medical Termination of Pregnancy Bill in 1961. I have never conceived it my duty as a member of Parliament to seek to amend the Ten Commandments. I spoke against that Bill in the House of Commons, as I spoke against Mr. Steele's Bill, and as I speak today, as the father of six children. One of them is mentally handicapped. May I quote a few of my words —

"I regret very much that that child is a burden on the community, but . . . it would be a terrible thing if . . . we opened any kind of door to what we rightly condemned in Nazi Germany where . . . the State decided that human beings should not exist because those human beings were of no value to the national economy, could not serve the war machine or 'required special care throughout life'.

" . . . The trouble is that in all these matters we proceed from one position to the next and we are scarcely aware sometimes of what is happening to us."

A world weariness, an un-Christian pessimism chills many hearts. There is temptation to despair of the moral order. They will say that you can't swim against the tide of history. One thing is certain about tides: they turn. A minority changed the law of the land in defiance of the law of God. A majority — and this great Rally and the others like it throughout the kingdom speak for the majority — can change the law again. The Select Committee has made but a start.

So, against the vested interests exposed by the Lane Committee and others, against those who make evil their good, against those who deny the rights of Creator and creation, let us take our stand and do battle.

Spengler saw the mark of decline in a civilisation when the having of children became a matter of debate. Children are our future. Let us make them our glory.

The Author of this article is a Harvard graduate. He studied history and classics at that university. In 1959, he was awarded a doctorate in philosophy by the Lateran University in Rome and one in history from the University of Navarre in Spain, in 1962. Since 1962, he has been chaplain to The Heights, a study centre and school for boys directed by the Opus Dei in Washington, D.C. in America. What Father Kennedy has to say in this article is as valid, we believe, in this country as it is in the United States. It is to us incredible that Bishops here, as well as in the United States, should allow this appalling state of affairs to continue.

The Seminary Crisis

REV. MALCOLM M. KENNEDY

EARLY in this century a creation by name of Pollyana held high rank in the pantheon of heroines whose business it was to inspire little girls. The apostle of positive thinking possessed a remarkable gift for turning any disaster into cause for instant gladness. After she had been fairly demolished by an automobile, Pollyana reacted with maddening optimism:

"And so it's hurt that I am, and not sick," she sighed at last, "Well I'm glad of that!"

"G-glad, Pollyana?" asked her aunt, who was sitting by her bed.

"Yes. I'd as much rather have broken legs like Mr. Pendleton's than life-long invalids like Mrs. Snow, you know . . ."

Pollyana rides again. Each time death or decay is announced within the Catholic Church, a chorus of Pollyanas dances in the infirmary chanting, "Never so good . . . Highly positive experience . . . Signs of the times . . ."

Seminaries provide a recent demonstration of the

phenomenon. Early in May the religious press carried the following story.

College-level seminary enrolment in the U.S. has dropped 64% in the past seven years . . . One fourth of the college seminaries that existed 8 years ago have closed . . . A number of the remaining seminaries may be forced to close because of a lack of students . . . The total college seminary enrolment in 1967-68 was 13,261. In the school year 1974-75 it was 4,796 . . . Of the 34 independent college seminaries (as distinct from the campus-related seminary college which depends on a nearby college for the academic portion of its programme) in continued existence the enrolment has declined from 5,663 in 1967-68 to 2,946 in 1974-75, a drop of 47.9%.

The *National Catholic Reporter* prefaced its May 16th feature article with the same dreary statistics. The body of the article thereupon soared into gleeful transports:

"I've been in seminaries 30 years and I'm happier now than I ever was," said Fr. Robert Coerver, rector of Kenrick Seminary in St. Louis . . . Coerver's comment reflected the wide-spread satisfaction of seminary administrators, faculty and students across the country who have gone through an intense period of experimentation, but have landed on their feet.

Criticism draws Replies

Dead or alive?

Two years ago the *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* editorialized on the declining enrolment of seminaries. Pastors, it said, were disinclined to send young men to seminaries where the discipline was poor and the doctrine was worse. The editorial triggered a spate of nervous replies mostly from seminary officials. Three answers were typical: (a) "You don't know how bad it is" (identity problems affect the entire clergy, including seminary professors and administrators; consider the permissiveness of the average seminarian's prior education and "the impossible task of straddling the fence between the more traditional and more progressive elements in the Church" — the spreadeagle dilemma); (b) "You don't know how great it is" ("paperback and article theology sure beats those musty traditional

manuals"). Finally, the most popular rejoinder: (c) "You don't know" (this does not mean "your facts are wrong," rather, "this is not your business"). "It would seem more proper," wrote one rector: "to allow the official magisterium to make judgments regarding these matters. In fact the National Conference of Bishops has instituted a visitation of U.S. seminaries to ascertain the effectiveness of their teaching (——— was visited this spring and received a favourable report), and shouldn't we express our loyalty to the hierarchy by standing behind the results of such visitations." "Quite simply," wrote another knowledgeable official,² "his assessment does not correspond to that of the Bishops' Committee. The members of the Committee on Priestly Formation have been able to observe seminaries and their students all across the country. They have found that the seminaries are working hard to implement the principles of Vatican II. Their success can be seen in the fact that most students have developed self-discipline, a high degree of moral awareness and behaviour and a high level of academic interest in all appropriate phases of learning." Two comments: are not moral awareness (presumably common to every member of the species), self-discipline and academic interest the very least we can expect from our seminarians? More on Vatican II later. In the second place, and without questioning the sincerity and dedication of these seminary officials, we must not lose sight of the recent, bizarre spectacle of clerics, bent upon the dissolution of church authority, hiding from criticism behind the skirts of the very authority they intend to disrobe.

I fell to musing on episcopal fact-finding tours and recalled "The Buddha's Smile," a story told by one of the "zeks" in A. Solzhenitsyn's *The First Circle*. In a large political prison the wretched inmates of a particular cell are taken out of the cell and to their amazement washed, perfumed, manicured, clothed and fed. Their amazement grows when they are led back to a cell that has been cleaned, ventilated, furnished with beds, magazines and even, in a corner, a small bookcase that contains a "white statue of the Roman Catholic Madonna . . . a Bible, the Koran, the Talmud . . . and a small bronze statue of Buddha. Buddha's eyes were almost closed, the corners of his lips were drawn back and it looked as if Buddha were smiling." Presently Mrs.

R——, the humanitarian widow of a famous statesman, is escorted into the "randomly selected" cell by prison officials and an orthodox priest. Mrs. R. is pleased with what she observed in the bewildered prisoners' cell and leaves. So, immediately afterwards, do all the recent innovations. "Only one thing was forgotten and left behind. In the niche, forgotten, the little bronze Buddha smiled mysteriously."

Seminaries today, of course, are not prisons. Their students have been liberated and bishops are not so easily taken in. The bishops' visitation of a seminary is a thorough and utterly exhausting ordeal. Yet there seems to be ample evidence to support the growing conviction that most seminarians are in bondage to the demythologized neo-modernism of "the Church of Christ without Christ" (Flannery O'Connor).

The brochure of a large midwestern theologate explains that three basic systematic theology courses are required of the students. The remaining courses in "dogma" are elective and the seminarian is strongly urged to choose from the following offerings:

Theology of the Earth: What are the theological implications of ecology... The traditional notion of the Kingdom of God needs to be carefully re-examined in the light of present-day problems.

In the argot of contemporary theology, the re-examination is called "horizontalization"; the Kingdom of God becomes an earthly paradise whose bliss is marred by oil spill and litter. Normally this kind of twaddle is reserved for the religious instruction of adolescents who are decreed unfit for rational concepts. ("Brother William" takes his tenth grade religion course out of doors on sunny days so that they can listen to the grass for the duration of the period.)

The description of the next course is more alarming:

Speaking of God: Is the word "God" dead, i.e., meaningless for modern man? How far can one demythologize belief in the Trinity, the Incarnation, etc., to make these articles of faith truly credible to the modern Christian?

The "how much can I disbelieve?" question has become a cliché. Usually it is reserved for such matters as the Assumption, the Virgin Birth, Christ's human knowledge and papal infallibility. Progressive theologians normally stop

short of the Trinity, the Incarnation and the existence of God. Not so our seminary, if the next course is any indication:

Toward a New Catholic Theism: Gregory Baum in a recent publication claims that since Vatican II the doctrine of God has undergone dramatic change. Reputable Catholic theologians now challenge the traditional belief in a personal God, and assert that God is immanent to the world process as its inspiration and/or goal. The theories of four theologians (Balthasar, Dewart, Fontinell and Baum himself) will be studied and the consequences of their respective theories for Christian life and worship carefully evaluated.

A good professor will, it is true, train his students to perceive the philosophical errors of agnostically oriented theologians. This, however, does not seem to be the seminary's intent. The "reputable Catholic theologians" apparently represent the New Magisterium.

Piety divorced from Doctrine

In fact, there is in this "trendy" collection of "paperback courses" precious little systematic theology. The name Aquinas does not occur once in the 24 pages of course descriptions. The basic authors are Schillebeeckx, Baum and Niebuhr. Ten "Historical Theology" courses are listed. Not one deals with medieval scholasticism. The 18th century "philosophes" could not display finer contempt for 13th century barbarism. The closest we come to a scholastic is the 12th century John of Salisbury who appears in the following "systematic theology" course:

Theology of Revolution: The philosophical and political underpinnings of revolutionary theory explored in writings like the Bible, Koran, John of Salisbury, Machiavelli, Mariana, the Encyclopedists, Marx, Lenin, Mao, et al. Relation of these criteria to the Christian way of life and ethics.

Perhaps the political prison analogy is not so outrageous after all. A militant Leninist could not more cunningly design a curriculum for turning out Modernist priests, i.e., atheist priests with theological vocabularies. Regarding the spiritually and discipline of seminaries I cannot report more than hearsay, although it is certain that piety divorced from doctrine is doomed.

"By their fruits you shall know them." Nine men were ordained last month for an eastern archdiocese; four refused their first assignment.

The spirit is 'mod'

I turned from the midwestern theologate to an east coast college seminary. The philosophy offerings of this are "trendy." Thomism does not seem as important to the curriculum as Sartre and Heidegger. The bare minimum of 18 semester hours that the bishops have been fighting for are stipulated, but the spirit is "mod."

Much less seems to be demanded of the student who arrives at a theologate with an undergraduate degree. Recently a bishop visited an Eastern theologate and asked one of the students about his background in philosophy. The young man answered that the course he had taken in college was deemed sufficient preparation. What was the subject matter of the course, the bishop inquired. The young man could not recall. Armed with this philosophical equipment he was blithely pursuing the labyrinthine ways of the New Theology.

In May of 1975, Cardinal Pietro Palazzinni summarized the doctrinal crisis that seems to affect most seminaries:

What really has been in crisis for the past 15 years (and Pius XII had indicated the causes, already latent in the environment, in the Encyclical Letter "Humani Generis" of August 12, 1950) is the whole system of Catholic theology and, with it, the magisterium and the discipline of the Church. We are witnessing an anthropological "about face" in theology, invaded by the subjectivist and anthropocentric character of modern culture.

We have seen the radical application of existentialistic philosophy to the Christian religion carried out by Harnack, Bultmann, Tillich, etc. Then came the theses of the secularized Christianity of Bonhoeffer, Robinson, Cox; we have also witnessed how deeply the Catholic world has been affected by the propagation of Marxism, of Freudian pansexualism, and by the champions of the New Theology from Schillebeeckx to K. Rahner and to Kung, from Oraison to Dewart, from Chenu to J. B. Metz, Gutierrez, etc.

In this way, emphasis has been put on the Christian

commitment to the human development of the person, on the building up of the temporal order, and even more on the personal encounter of man with God through immediate service to one's neighbours, or, in other words, through social action.

The result has been contempt for the direct and immediate encounter of man with God through personal prayer, acts of worship and adoration, contemplation and meditation on the eternal truths and the last things, apostolic activities of a strictly spiritual and religious nature, etc.

Understanding this state of affairs that impoverishes and temporalizes the whole of Christian life, one understands quite well the reasons for the crisis that now affects the priest, called by our Redeemer to preach His Kingdom, "which is not of this world." Therefore, even when their activity has its beginning in this world, the eyes of Christians must never lose sight of heaven.³

Most priests can assemble a lengthy and telling chronicle of the seminary problem. Every priest, on the strength of his having attended a seminary, will confidently draw up a blueprint for the ideal operation of such institutions. (Every 12th grader knows precisely what ails secondary education in America.) The important question is what is the Church's blueprint.

Concern is Evident

The modern seminary is the creation of the decree, *Cum Adolescentium Aetas*, of the Council of Trent. The decree was so important that the council fathers themselves felt that "even if no other benefit came of the council, this decree alone compensated for all their troubles and labours."⁴

Since Trent no other institution has received so much attention from the Magisterium as the seminary. During the past 100 years the literature on priestly life and training includes three encyclical letters of Leo XIII, St. Pius X's *Haerent Animo* and numerous apostolic constitutions of the same pontiff, encyclical letters of Benedict XV, Pius XI, Pius XII and finally the letter *Sacerdotii nostri primordia* of John XXIII and Paul VI's *Sacerdotalis coelibatus*.

In addition the past 15 years have seen two apposite conciliar decrees: *Optatam totius* and *Presbyterorum ordinis*,

the letter of the Sacred Congregation of Studies, Aug. 27, 1960, the letter of the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, Oct. 18, 1969, the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* or The Basic Plan for Priestly Formation promulgated in March 1970 by the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, and the letter of the same congregation dated Jan. 20, 1972.

All of the above documents focus on spiritual life and doctrinal formation. The 1960 letter speaks of:

The wave of naturalism that seems to have invaded certain centres of priestly formation, often with the complicity of those who, condemning the past *en bloc* because of its inability to inspire younger priests, desperately pursue methods of modernization. It (the wave of naturalism) has also been aided by the somewhat fatalistic passivity of others who, while lamenting in their hearts this dangerous change of direction, resign themselves to it as the inevitable consequence of the times. These are instances of a depressing process that in some measure attacks all aspects of ecclesiastical education. Its common denominator may be located in a noticeable lessening of the supernatural element.

In *Haerent animo* St. Pius X wrote: "There is one quality which indisputably links man with God and makes him a pleasing and not unworthy 'dispenser' of his mercy, namely sanctity of life and morals. If this, which is but the supereminent knowledge of Jesus Christ, is lacking in a priest, all things are lacking (author's italics)." Sanctity of priests, the 1960 letter urged, was indispensable for the spiritual health of the world:

The progress of Christian life is intimately linked to the sanctity of God's priests whose mission is . . . to enlighten and preserve from corruption by means of a living example as well as by grace.

The letter warned against a "presumed spirituality of action" because priests "whose training has been based on activism will not be capable of any deep apostolic work nor will they successfully overcome difficulties and discouragement."

Effective Priests Pray

The ingredients of sanctity do not change with time and

fashion. Piety, obedience, chastity, mortification and zeal for souls continue to be the signs of the true priest, even if not the "signs of the times," and consequently they must also be the goals of a true seminary (cf. *Ratio Fundamentalis*, ch. 8). "The seminarian must be convinced that he does not become a stranger to his time by the mere fact of not admitting its aberrations" (Letter of S.C. of Studies, 1960). He must not be afraid of seeming a "curious character among men; a museum piece in one's civilization; irrelevant . . . to the common strivings of one's generation. It is what Pope Paul identified recently in a talk on the vocation crisis as a form of 'human respect'."³

"I don't believe in the effectiveness of a priest who is not a man of prayer." Vatican II emphasized this criterion:

Seminarians should learn to live in an intimate union with the Father, through his Son, Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit . . . to adhere to him as friends, in an intimate companionship their whole life through . . . They should love and venerate with a filial trust the most Blessed Virgin . . . Those practices of piety that are commended by the long usage of the Church should be zealously cultivated . . . (*Optatam totius*, no. 8).

The whole pattern of seminary life (is to be) permeated with a desire for piety (*Ibid.*, no. 11).

The Basic Plan goes on to urge frequent sacramental confession, personal spiritual direction (cf. *Presbyterorum ordinis*, no. 18), daily participation in the Eucharistic sacrifice — "the priest's greatest task" (*Ibid.*, no. 13), "the goal and perfection of his ministry" (*Ibid.*, no. 2), which stands as the root and centre of the whole life of a priest. What takes place on the altar of sacrifice, the priestly heart must make his own. This cannot be done unless priests through prayer continue to penetrate more deeply into the mystery of Christ (*Presbyterorum ordinis*, no. 14).

The rite of ordination puts it succinctly: "Imitate what you do."

Philosophy goes Begging

A remarkable phenomenon in recent church history has been the deaf ear turned to official guidelines on the

doctrinal formation of priests ("Stonewalling" in the political jargon of the day). For years the cancer of immanentist and existentialist philosophies has been eating away the Church's vitality, undermining the study of revealed truth and providing the flimsy pretext for rampant materialism in its priests. Popes, councils, authoritative church decrees protest, but there is no improvement.

Concerning the study of philosophy, the Magisterium has insisted on the nature of the philosophy taught and the amount of teaching to be done. At least two full years are to be devoted to philosophy (Basic Plan, ch. IX, 60, c), lest the latter "be reduced to a fragmentary consideration of problems arising from questions in theology" (Basic Plan, IX, 59, c). This requirement is not often observed. A professor of moral theology in one of the larger seminaries complains that he could not this year assign a recent and excellent text because his students were not trained to handle its philosophical concepts.

No more encouraging has been the response to the Magisterium's instructions on the kind of philosophy seminaries should teach. Since John XXII in the 14th century first officially recommended the philosophical principles of St. Thomas Aquinas, that saint's philosophy has been held in singular honour by every ecumenical council down to the present. Pope after pope has reiterated the recommendation. Leo XIII's *Aeterni Patris* (no. 31) urged: "Let the universities already founded by you illustrate and defend this doctrine." The following year he made St. Thomas the patron of all Catholic schools. His successor, St. Pius X, was more insistent:

The most important points of St. Thomas' philosophy must not be considered something left to opinion and even to be disputed; they are the foundations upon which the whole of natural and divine science rests. If these foundations are rejected or perverted, it must necessarily follow that students of the sacred sciences will not even be able to grasp the meaning of the words used by the Magisterium of the Church to expound the dogmas revealed by God... We therefore desired that all teachers of philosophy and sacred theology should be warned that if they deviated so much as a step, in metaphysics especially, from Aquinas, it will not be without great harm... (*Motu Proprio, Doctoris Angelici*,

June 29, 1914; the same words occur in the encyclicals *Pascendi* and *Sacrorum Antistitum*).

... For they must bear in mind that they have not been entrusted with the duty of teaching in order to impart to their pupils whatever opinions they please, but to instruct them in the most approved doctrines of the Church" (*Ibid.*).

Have these norms been repudiated or even toned down by the "new Church"? Did Vatican II shelve Aquinas and open the doors to theologies of ecology and liberation, to the ongoing revelation of a "dead God"? The surprising fact is that no council before Vatican II ever recommended a particular author. Vatican II, however, did so in two decrees: *Optatam totius* and the *Declaration on Christian Education*. "This was the first time," wrote Pope Paul VI on Jan. 30, 1975, "that an ecumenical council commended a particular theologian," for *Optatam totius* after establishing that philosophical disciplines be explained with the support of "the perennially valid heritage" (no. 5), goes on to state (no. 15) that philosophy and theology be taught "under the guidance of St. Thomas."

The same ecumenical council in its *Declaration on Christian Education*, having urged that in schools of higher learning those in charge should take most careful account of contemporary advances in knowledge, in order to understand more deeply how reason and faith give harmonious witness to the unity of all truth, immediately adds that for this it is necessary to follow in the footsteps of the Doctors of the Church, especially of St. Thomas Aquinas (Pope Paul VI, Jan. 30, 1975).

The Magisterium does recommend that the students be acquainted with (not indoctrinated in) the prevailing philosophies of the age and the particular country; it allows for some pluralism in philosophical matters. Nevertheless, "pluralism cannot be permitted which compromises the fundamental nucleus of questions tied to revelation... Revelation is absolutely incompatible with all relativism, epistemological, moral or metaphysical, with all materialism, pantheism, immanentism, subjectivism and atheism" (Letter of the S.C. for Catholic Education, Jan. 20, 1972, ch. III). The closing paragraph of this 1972 letter returns to the familiar theme:

In this sense the repeated recommendations of the Church

about the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas remain fully justified and still valid. In this philosophy, the first principles of natural truth are clearly and organically enunciated and harmonized with revelation.

Plaintiff voices try to make themselves heard:

Although the II Vatican Council drew out with clarity certain fundamental lines for the proper renewal of philosophical teaching, today six years after the Council, we have unfortunately to admit that not all our seminaries are following these lines wished by the Church (Letter of the S.C. for Catholic Education, Jan. 1972).

"Not all" was charitable.

And have the seminaries come through in the past three years? In his letter dated Jan. 30, 1975, Pope Paul does not seem to think that they have:

The authority of St. Thomas has frequently been confirmed by our predecessors and by ourself. Let it be clear to all that there is no question in this of a doctrinal conservatism closed to historical development and fearful of progress. Rather it is based on the *objective* and *intrinsic* realism of the philosophy and theology of Aquinas . . . the gnoseological and ontological realism which is (its) first and fundamental characteristic . . . We are well aware that these views are not shared by all at the present time. It has not escaped our notice that distrust of St. Thomas or opposition to his teaching is frequently found where his teaching has been superficially or merely occasionally consulted. Indeed it sometimes happens that in such cases his works have not even been read, much less seriously studied.

The Pope speaks. Could it be said of the seminary establishment that "hearing they do not hear"?

June 12, 1975. The Catholic press reports that "the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic Education has issued a decree lamenting the decline in the study of canon law and ordering renewed stress on that subject in seminaries." Marriage procedures in many dioceses lead one to suspect that the bare minimum of canonical-legal sense is lacking. But will the Vatican decrees on the study of Canon Law be implemented?

The seminarian today spends considerable time off campus in sundry apostolic ministries. Even so, the study of

theology should claim most of his hours, a full quadrennium. To illustrate the point two official pronouncements will be cited, one concerning the students and the other having to do with professors. The two pronouncements occur in the 1969 Letter of the Sacred Congregation of the Clergy. In essence they repeat the obvious: the seminarian should not dictate to the professors what he will be taught, and the professor will teach according to the dictates of the Church.

The determination of subject matter is not made in response to the will of individuals, nor according to the fashion of the day, nor according to a particular theological school. Though it is always necessary to have regard for what the priests desire, this cannot be a deciding factor in determining the curriculum for theological education.

They (faculty and staff) should be chosen by virtue of their common mind with the Church (*sentire cum Ecclesia*) which presupposes that they be faithful theologians . . . Those persons are fit for this task who resolve the questions presented to them: not those who raise or aggravate doubts. Reputation and the pursuit of novelty in the explication or presentation of questions are not standards for selection. Those who are in the habit of attacking traditions, instructions and the authority of the Church are not suited for this task. They should be chosen from among those priests who think in tune with the Church and do not allow themselves to be turned from that path.

This warning on the dangers of novelty and celebrity applies equally to the future priest who is so remarkably prone to getting his vocation mixed up with that of the social worker and politician. It is required "of priests that they be mature in knowledge and that their teaching be spiritual medicine for the people of God" (*Presbyterorum ordinis*, no. 19). Therefore they will only need cinematography, behavioural psychology and the rest to the extent that they assist their spiritual task. "A priest should be exclusively a man of God. He should reject any desire to shine in areas where other Christians do not need him. A priest is not a psychologist, nor a sociologist, nor an anthropologist. He is another Christ, Christ himself, who has to look after the souls of his brothers." 7 Many years ago Frank Sheed told a group of seminarians in Ohio: "Make up your mind whether you are

preaching Christ or yourself. If you're preaching yourself, heaven help you, for the better you do it, the worse it is." ⁸

When the newly elected Adrian VI reached the Papal States in 1521, it is said that he could not recognize the cardinals of the Sacred College who came to greet him, so identical were they in appearance to the secular princelings, of Renaissance Italy. He was not alone in seeing the need for the reform of the Church "in its head and in its members" that for two centuries had been the subject of much talk and little action. The Cardinals Campeggio and Schinner had compiled for his benefit an unsparing bill of particulars. The great Cajetan wrote to him that the Church was "defiled by filthy practices, destitute of spiritual goods, steeped in the darkness of ignorance . . . And we (prelates) who should have been the salt of the earth, have decayed until we are good for nothing beyond outward ceremonial and external good fortune." ⁹

History can Repeat

Despite the cancerous rot, the prelates did not in sufficient number have the nerve to act. They resembled the Romans described by the satirist of the decaying Empire: "We can neither stand our vices nor their cure." The surgery required to forestall the breakdown of Christendom was altogether too painful for worldly clerics. The reform did not come until after the revolt had succeeded. Half of Europe, goaded by the rapacity of secular rulers, seceded from the community of faith. Monasteries, convents, chantry schools were gobbled up. Shrines and churches were desecrated. The altars were torn up from the floors. The Mass was said no more. And all in the name of reform. In the late 1800's, on learning of Samuel Johnson's dictum that patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel, Roscoe Conkling, a New York politician, remarked that Dr. Johnson had overlooked the possibilities in the word "reform." ¹⁰

History has curious ways of repeating itself. Adrian VI would have no trouble spotting the members of the Sacred College today, but he would be hard pressed to distinguish many of our seminarians, priests and religious from their modish contemporaries. Similarly, reform has proven to be as equivocal a concept now as it was in his day.

Reform is Needed

Reformers today have converted the Mass into vapid entertainment where the Body and Blood of Christ are treated with a nonchalance approaching mockery. Reformers have shoved the tabernacle (such a nuisance!) into a hidden corner, if they have not eliminated it altogether. Reformers berate the spirit of adoration and atonement as "the opium of the people." They despise prayer and mortification as the mark of a disincarnate and individualistic mentality. Sacraments no longer cause grace, they only express faith. Reformers write textbooks that drivel endlessly about rethinking original sin, Mary's virginity and every other article of faith. They subvert the objective norms of morality in the interest of personalism, while the personal soul sinks into the anonymous crowd that awaits the graceless, collective absolution. Is this reform or suicide?

Yet reform is needed. The voice of the Magisterium, the Holy Father, bishops, priests and, especially, lay people the world over plead for it. Could a more suitable starting point be found than the seminary whence in the ordinary course of events proceed pope, bishop and priest?

Occasionally I am told of this or that bishop who is so appalled by the state of his own diocesan seminary that he is afraid to visit it. The bishop is wanting in nerve. If obedience to the mandate he has received from Christ and his Church means anything to him, he should make a thorough cleaning of that house of his, and let the jackals howl. Reform is painful, and provokes no end of howling. For fear of that pain, the Church lost entire nations in the 16th century. Souls in equal numbers are being lost today. Houses of religion and schools are not noisily confiscated as they were then; they are quietly secularized, abandoned and sold off to the highest bidder. *One-fourth of the college seminaries that existed eight years ago have closed.* Shall we wait for the rest of them to disappear?

Seminaries need the Best

The sheep are scattered (Ezek. 34:5-6) because their shepherds ignore the wolves and jackals. The remedy is obvious and urgent. "Superiors and professors must dedicate

themselves in diligent harmony and faithful obedience to the authority of the bishop" (*Optatam totius*, no. 4). In many cases they must simply be replaced. It will do no good to put new programmes or texts into their hands; they will ignore the voice of the Magisterium just as consistently as they have in the past.

Pope Pius XI wrote: "Give your best priests to the seminaries; do not hesitate to relieve them of tasks that seem very important; they really cannot be compared to this foremost and irreplaceable task."¹¹

The housecleaning must extend to libraries and reading lists. Honestly, were the *monita* of the Holy See that forbade the teaching of certain exegetical theories and the reading of certain sci-fi theologies ever observed?

Our housecleaning must finally encompass the fast dwindling body of the seminarians themselves, so that the Church may be blessed with candidates for the priesthood of manly virtue, masters of divine and certain knowledge, zealous for souls, for interior life, for union with Christ our Lord.

"I will appoint shepherds for them who will shepherd them, so that they need no longer fear and tremble; and none shall be missing, says the Lord" (Jer. 23:4).

1 *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, November, 1973, p. 6.

2 *Ibid.* p. 6.

3 *Palabra*, May 1975, Madrid, p. 9.

4 Sforza Tallovacina, *Storia del Concilio di Trento*, Milan 1834, II, p. 246.

5 Card. John Wright, "Reflections on Crisis in Vocations," *L'Osservatore Romano*, July 25, 1974.

6 *Conversations with Msgr. Escrivá de Balaguer*, no. 3.

7 J. Escrivá de Balaguer, *Christ Is Passing By*, Scepter Publishers, no. 79.

8 *The Church and I*, Doubleday, 1974, p. 142.

9 Quoted by P. Hughes, *History of the Church*, vol. III, p. 474, note 4: "Turpissimis moribus foedata, bonis spiritualibus destituta, ignorantiae tenebris obsessa."

10 Samuel Q. Wilson in the *Washington Post*, April 14, 1975.

11 Encyclical *Ad Catholicos Sacerdotes*, Dec. 20, 1935. The following words of St. Pius X should also be noted: "Equal diligence and severity are to be used in examining and selecting candidates for Holy Orders. Far, far from the clergy be the love of novelty! God hatheth the proud and obstinate mind. For the future the doctorate of theology and canon law must never be conferred on anyone who has not first of all made the regular course of scholastic philosophy; if conferred, it shall be held as null and void." *Sacrorum Antistum*, II, Sept. 8.

Any Questions

WILLIAM LAWSON, S.J.

In your recent Answer on democracy in the Church, why did you not mention collegiality?

Because there was no room within the limited number of words I am allowed for each Answer, and also because the questioner was a layman, and the laity have not yet begun to claim seriously that "the People of God" is a college.

"College" is a word that it is easy to play about with. We are accustomed in the Church to "the College of Cardinals", which is the body of senior ecclesiastics in the See of Rome who have special functions and privileges, serve the Pope as a council and elect his successor. But "college" can also mean an independent corporation, or a governing body, as in "the Royal College of Surgeons". Since Vatican Council II there has been a steady campaign to persuade the Church that the bishops form a college in that sense, not just when they are called by the Pope to meet all together in Council, and under him to consider the state of the Church and legislate for it, but permanently. They would be a body essential to the constitution of the Church, with a constitutional right to share all the time in the government of the universal Church. The Pope's primal and universal jurisdiction would have to be acknowledged, because it is defined doctrine; but its exercise would be so restricted that the Pope would become, in effect, a constitutional monarch. Cardinal Suenen's book, *Coresponsibility in the Church*, is strongly in favour of constitutional "reform" of the Church on those lines.

Collegiality in that sense is contrary to Tradition, and it is unacceptable. Bishops are in communion with the Pope not as a college but as persons, and, General Councils apart, it is as individuals that they work with him in the government of the Church, exercising the jurisdiction which belongs to them as diocesan bishops appointed by the supreme pastor.

What exactly is meant by "active" and "passive" virtues in the context of the Americanism heresy?

I am told that there are some now in the Church who deny that there ever was a heresy of Americanism. It could be they who have revived that heresy to take its place with other zombies dug up from ancient graveyards.

The original Americanism, condemned by Leo XIII, flourished briefly in the United States just before 1900. It was a well-meaning but misguided attempt to make the Church "open to the world", and it looks as modern as the false *aggiornamento* which claims to fulfil the hopes of the Council. In its day it tried to appeal to appeal to "the modern mind" by presenting Catholicism as a religion in which the ideals honoured by men of the world were also held in high honour. The Church, so said the authors of this heresy, should play down what they called "the passive virtues" — humility, for example, and obedience — and should make much of what they called "the active virtues" — humanitarianism, for example, and democracy. The secularizing tendency of that suggestion is obvious. Underlying it, as Leo XIII said in his condemnation, was a denial of the supernatural and a willingness to tone down dogmas which "the modern mind" found unacceptable. There we have, nearly a century ago, the errors which are embraced today in the hope of recommending the Church to the latest version of the modern mind.

What is certain is that the irreligious world will not be converted to that Church. Any "conversion" has been surrender from the Catholic side; and the Catholics seeking alliance with the world will be contemptuously accepted and cynically exploited by a world which is determined to stay secular. Catholics may go over to that world, but they cannot bring the Church with them.

Book Reviews

LEAVE THESE ALONE

The Religious Life Today by Father Karl Rahner, Burns & Oates, £1.50; pp. 88. *Questions and Answers* by Otto Pesch, Burns & Oates, £1.95; pp. 89.

Fr. Mark Schoof, O.P., in his laudatory pen-picture of Fr. Karl Rahner in *Breakthrough*, writes, "His energetic spirit . . . is frequently discernible even in the inordinately long sentences of his articles, even though these sometimes give the first impression of being . . . impossible to penetrate . . ." and later adds, "The controversial points in Rahner's writings provided a natural point of departure for a long series of warnings and prohibitions, although there was no open condemnation . . ." Well, we were warned, and the present book justifies at least the first part of the warning. It has been the avowed aim of the Church to present the Faith freshly and vividly to modern man, but much of this book is nigh-unreadable; the reader wades through parenthesis after parenthesis, trying to keep touch with what the author is striving to say, and wondering if time and care would not have allowed the over-busy man to convey it clearly.

The following is clear enough (p.3) but is woefully inadequate: "Different formulations need not be so divergent as to split the Church, nor must they necessarily be transcended in a single form of words, provided that two criteria are observed. Firstly, there must be no weakening of the insistence that human beings are totally dependent on Jesus for an historical assurance of their 'salvation' (however we are to understand that word). Secondly (for there is no other way in which dependency on Jesus is possible), the historical transmission of our dependence on Jesus must be recognized as fundamental and essential". Is this watery lowest-common-factor all that is necessary for unity of Catholic belief? I do not believe for one moment that Fr. Rahner holds so.

Occasionally, he makes a "progressive" statement which rests only on confident assertion, e.g. (p.11): "The changes in

religious life are only a part of the change in the Church which, viewed as a whole, is necessary. Because the world changes, the Church must change with it . . . Orders will have to evolve a new life-style, perhaps more 'individualistic' and 'anti-authoritarian' and in some sense, seen from without, more secular, more consistent with the life-style of modern man, who has 'come of age' ". (Has modern man come of age spiritually, which is all that is relevant in our context?*) Again, p.33: "Grass-roots Christians can no longer be a flock willingly led by the clergy". Does this mean any more than that humility, obedience and loyalty are in short supply? Are these Christians Catholics if they will not be led especially by the man to whom the Son of God entrusted the supreme charge of the flock? I diagnose a complete lack of fresh thought in this sort of writing, and the fact that "grass-roots" grow eight times on one page (p.34), confirms my diagnosis of tired, unimaginative composition.

At times, too, one scents the academic who is way out of touch with reality, as when Fr. Rahner writes of the Church (pp. 40-41): "The community must be open. Anyone who wants to should have the right to live and work within it. It should be possible to give responsibility within the community to people who, by the standards of strict and in itself legitimate orthodoxy, are not in the full and complete sense Catholic Christians, provided that their aim is not to infiltrate the Church doctrinally or institutionally and change its character. Those who regard themselves as 'progressive' have no reason to despair of the existing Church . . . Those who call themselves 'conservative' must remember that they have a duty to be charitable, patient and broad-minded towards those about whose orthodoxy they harbour justified or (sometimes) unjustified doubts". With respect, Catholics have a duty not to be broad-minded towards those about whose orthodoxy they harbour justified doubts, but, instead, must follow the Apostles faithfully in the matter.

Yet, though this book would be of little practical value to the religious for whom it is intended, there are some excellent observations in it, e.g. (p.67): "No one may be forced into actions which are against his conscience; but the conscientious objector has no right to force the (religious)

* " . . . perfect manhood, that maturity which is proportioned to the completed growth Christ . . ." Ephesians, 4.13.

order, by his objection, into an action or toleration which the order regards as a contradiction of its substance. (For example, nobody can, by appealing to his conscience, wish to be an atheist or a heretic or married and a religious.) Every (ecclesial or secular) society basically claims the right to take action against even 'conscientious' objectors in certain circumstances." This is a vital principle which applies especially to those who cried 'Conscience!' when the Pope reiterated the Church's age-old teaching in *Humanae Vitae*.

Questions and Answers is a very different kettle of fish from the preceding book, fresh in its presentation and therefore highly readable. Its title and its sub-title, *A Shorter Catholic Catechism*, are in fact unfair to it, since it does not consist of staccato questions and answers, but of a series of questions to each of which a chapter is devoted. At times, the Author stimulates with a fresh approach; at times he is unconvincing (as in the chapter, *Is There a God?*); at times he leaves one uneasy (as in, *Does Morality Change?* when he appears to establish only that the magisterium of the Church is untrustworthy and it is now a matter of every man for himself); and, on a rare occasion, he talks nonsense (e.g. p.75; "When . . . the Council of Chalcedon . . . proclaimed . . . that there were two natures in Jesus — the divine and the human — everyone knew what was meant. We hardly understand it today". Have we grown stupid, or is it a matter of disbelief?).

Yet, space being short, I pass over the book's felicities and lesser failings and state categorically that the chapter *Why Should We Go to Church on Sunday?* should have barred it from winning a (Westminster) imprimatur. We read in another chapter, *Do We Still Need Priests?*, "The only thing that makes a priest different from all the rest of us is his special task", without mention of his powers, though there is vague talk of administering the Sacraments. This fits in only too well with the *Church on Sunday* section, in which we expect to find a clear exposition of Catholic belief but never come on an honest statement of what we mean by the Real Presence. What is said, joined to what is resoundingly not said, trumpets transignification (i.e., disbelief) in place of transubstantiation. If I have judged wrongly, the Author has only himself to blame; e.g. from p.54: ". . . or, as we say,

Christ's presence in the bread and wine". No, we do not say — because the bread and wine cease to exist at the Consecration. Protestants, however, say. Again: "... experience his presence in receiving the bread and wine ...". Once more: "... nor is Jesus present in his earthly form in the bread and wine" — a statement crying for clarification. What is worse, we are given the miserable transignificationist parallel, which originated with the Dutch Fr. Smits, who compared Christ's presence in the Blessed Sacrament to the way in which a Dutch housewife "gave herself" in a gift of cookies. This time it is a husband giving roses to his wife ... "This comparison brings us closer to understanding what Jesus means. Jesus isn't present materially. He is personally present ... through his love ...". May I give a tip for spotting disbelief in transubstantiation? It is to look for the way in which a man keeps to an adverb like "materially" or "physically" instead of to a noun. It is true that Jesus is not present materially, if we mean by that the manner of His presence (e.g. visibly, etc.); but His material body is present, and it is not only a question of presence through love; but through the change of the whole substance of bread and wine into His physical Body and Blood. From what I have read recently, I come to the conclusion that, in spite of *Mysterium Fidei*, disbelief in the Real Presence is being allowed to spread unchecked in the Church. We have had the true teaching; now we need action.

I do not understand how the censors let this chapter pass, and I cannot recommend the book.

Fr. John McKee

Those rare Frenchmen who, in 1933, tried to alert their fellow men were called war-mongers. In the same way we (traditionalists) are accused of dividing the Church, while we are in fact trying to keep it united. — *Courrier Hebdomadaire de Pierre Debray*, 14/5/74.

Who's to Be the Next Vicar of Bray, Sir?

A Catholic in the reign of Bess,
Would have to toe the line, Sir;
He'd go to the local Protestant church,
Or pay a hefty fine, Sir.
And when she'd taken all his cash,
In prison he would pine, Sir;
And if he gave her further cheek,
His death warrant she would sign, Sir.

A Catholic under George the Sixth,
Was told just where he stood, Sir;
He had Ten from the Lord and Six from the Church,
And that's what kept him good, Sir.
Mother Church brought him up in the way he should go,
And ignored his silly moods, Sir;
And she kept him sane and saved his soul,
Whether or no he would, Sir.

A Catholic in the present reign,
Will be put outside the Fold, Sir;
If he clings to the church of his childhood days,
And doesn't do what he's told, Sir:
And exchange the beautiful things he loved,
For the New Form that leaves him cold, Sir:
Small blame if he'd rather been hanged by Bess,
In the happier days of old, Sir.

S.G.